

(only), ad no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another. Then unto your Lord is your return, so He will tell you that wherein you have been differing.” (Qur’an 6: 161-164)

The Prophet’s training of his Companions ﷺ yielded blessed fruits: They became purified from everything that conflicts with *Tawheed Al-Uloohiyyah*, *Tawheed Ar-Ruboobiyyah*, and *Tawheed Al-Asmaa Was-Sifaat*. And so they turned to Allah ﷻ alone for judgment in all matters; they obeyed none save Allah ﷻ; if following a person meant disobeying Allah ﷻ, they wouldn’t follow that person, regardless of who he was; they loved no one as much as they loved Allah ﷻ; they feared none but Allah ﷻ; they depended upon Allah ﷻ alone; they sought refuge only with Allah ﷻ; they invoked Allah ﷻ alone for help and for forgiveness; when they slaughtered an animal, they did so only for Allah ﷻ (by mentioning His Name); and when they took an oath, they did so only by Allah’s Name. They sought help from Allah ﷻ alone; they bowed down and prostrated to none but Allah ﷻ; they did not liken Allah ﷻ to anyone or any thing. They established for Allah ﷻ those qualities that He ﷻ established for Himself or that His Messenger ﷺ established for Him; they did so without distorting the meanings of Allah’s perfect qualities, without negating His perfect qualities, and without falsely interpreting His perfect qualities. In short, they realized *Tawheed* in all aspects of their lives – in their souls and in their outward deeds.

One of the recurring themes of Makkan Verses of the Qur’an was the Messengership of Muhammad ﷺ; these Verses confirmed the fact that Muhammad ﷺ was sent to all of mankind, and to jinns as well. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ (٢٨)

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of men know not.” (Qur’an 34: 28)

In another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ يَتَّيِّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ
الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah – to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He); It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad ﷺ) who believes in Allah and His Words [(this Qur’an), the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and also Allah’s Word: “Be!” – and he was i.e., Allah’s Word: “Be!” – and he was, i.e., ‘Eesa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary) ﷺ], and follow him so that you may be guided.” (Qur’an 7: 158)

And in yet another part of the Qur’an, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ مُنْذِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالُوا يَا قَوْمَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنزِلَ مِن بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَىٰ طَرِيقِ
مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ يَا قَوْمَنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ، يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيَجْرِمُ
مِن عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾﴾

“And (remember) when We sent towards you (Muhammad ﷺ) Nafran (three to ten persons) of the jinns, (quietly) listening to the Qur’an, when they stood in the presence thereof, they said: “Listen in silence!” And when it was finished, they returned to their people, as warners. They said: “O our people! Verily! We have heard a Book (this Qur’an) sent down after Moosa (Moses), confirming what came before it, it guides to the truth and to a Straight Path (i.e., Islam). O our people! Respond (with obedience) to Allah’s caller (i.e., Allah’s Messenger

Muhammad ﷺ), and believe in him (i.e., believe in that which Muhammad ﷺ has brought from Allah and follow him). He (Allah) will forgive you of your sins, and will save you from a painful torment (i.e., Hellfire).” (Qur’an 46: 29-31)

Verses with a similar meaning abound in the Qur’an.

Just as some Makkan Verses of the Qur’an instilled into the hearts of the Prophet’s Companions ﷺ correct beliefs regarding *Tawheed* (and its categories) and the mission of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, other Makkan Verses corrected the Companions’ beliefs regarding the angels, informing them that angels are from Allah’s creation. The angels worship Allah ﷻ and perform prostration to Him. They are His slaves, and in no way whatsoever are they partners to Him ﷻ; they can neither harm nor benefit except by His command.

﴿وَيُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْمِحَالِ ﴿١٣﴾﴾

“And Ar-Ra’d (thunder) glorifies and praise Him, and so do the angels because of His Awe. He sends the thunderbolts, and therewith He strikes whom He wills, yet they (disbelievers) dispute about Allah. And He is Mighty in strength and Severe in punishment.” (Qur’an 13: 13)

﴿وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾﴾

“And to Allah prostrate all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, of the live moving creatures and the angels, and they are not proud [i.e., they worship their Lord (Allah) with humility].” (Qur’an 16: 49)

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولَىٰ أَجْنَحَةٍ مَّتَنَىٰ وَتَلَتْ وَرَبَعَ يَزِيدُ فِي الْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾﴾

“All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the (only) Originator [or the (Only) Creator] of the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels messengers with wings, – two or three or four. He increases in creation what He wills. Verily, Allah is Able to do all things.” (Qur’an 35: 1)

قُلْ أَدْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِيهِمَا مِنْ شِرْكٍَ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ ظَهِيرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

“Say: (O Muhammad ﷺ to those polytheists, pagans, etc.)
“Call upon those whom you assert (to be associate gods) besides Allah, they possess not even the weight of an atom (or a small ant), – either in the heavens or on the earth, nor have they any share in either, nor there is for Him any supporter from among them.” (Qur’an 34: 22)

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُ وَلَهُ يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿٢٠٦﴾﴾

“Surely, those who are with your Lord (angels) are never too proud to perform acts of worship to Him, but they glorify His Praise and prostrate before Him.” (Qur’an 7: 206)

Similarly, in other Makkan Verses of the Qur’an, the rest of the pillars of Eemaan (faith) were explained to the believers. And some Verses explained how the Qur’an was being revealed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

﴿وَقُرْآنًا فَرَقْنَاهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ عَلَى مُكْثٍ وَنَزَّلْنَاهُ نَزِيلًا ﴿١٠٦﴾﴾

“And (it is) a Qur’an which We have divided (into parts), in order that you might recite it to men at intervals. And We have revealed it by stages (in 23 years).” (Qur’an 17: 106)

﴿اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانِيَ نَقَشَتْ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلَيْنُ جُلُودَهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُضَلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

“Allah has sent down the Best Statement, a Book (this Qur’an), its parts resembling each other in goodness and truth, oft-repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it (when they recite it or hear it). Then their skin and their heart soften to the remembrance of Allah. That is the guidance of Allah. He Guides therewith whom He pleases and whomever Allah sends astray, for him there is no guide.” (Qur’an 39: 23)

﴿وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَى بَشَرٍ مِّن شَيْءٍ قُلْ مَن أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي جَاء بِهِ مُوسَى نُورًا وَهُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ لِيَجْعَلُوهُ قُرْآنًا مَّجِيدًا وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا وَعَلَّمْتُم مَّا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ وَلَا ءَابَاؤُكُمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِي خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩١﴾﴾

“They (the Jews, Quraish pagans, idolaters, etc.) did not estimate Allah with an estimation due to Him when they said: “Nothing did Allah send down to any human being (by revelation).” Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Who then sent down the Book which Moosa (Moses) brought, a light and a guidance to mankind which you (the Jews) have made into (separate) papersheets, disclosing (some of it) and concealing (much). And you (believers in Allah and His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ), were taught (through the Qur’an) that which neither you nor your fathers knew.” Say: “Allah (sent it down).” Then leave them to play in their vain discussions.” (Qur’an 6: 91)

Concerning belief in revealed Books, which is one of the pillars of Eemaan, Allah ﷻ informed the believers that He ﷻ has sent down Books other than the Qur’an:

﴿وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيِّينَ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا ﴿٥٥﴾﴾

“And your Lord knows best all who are in the heavens and the earth. And indeed, We have preferred some of the Prophets above others, and to Daawood (David) We gave the Zaboor (Psalms).” (Qur’an 17: 55)

﴿زَلَّ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ﴾ (٣)

“It is He Who has sent down the Book (the Qur’an) to you (Muhammad ﷺ) with truth, confirming what came before it. And he sent down the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel).” (Qur’an 3: 3)

﴿وَكَمْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ نَبِيِّ فِي الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾ (٦)

“And how many a Prophet have We sent amongst the men of old.” (Qur’an 43: 6)

The Qur’an mentions some but certainly not all of them:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ لَمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِثَابِتٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَصِيَ بِالْحَقِّ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ﴾ (٧٨)

“And, indeed We have sent Messengers before you (O Muhammad ﷺ); of some of them We have related to you their story and of some We have not related to you their story, and it was not given to any Messenger that he should bring a sign except by the Leave of Allah. So, when comes the Commandment of Allah, the matter will be decided with truth, and the followers of falsehood will then be lost.” (Qur’an 40: 78)

A Description Of Paradise In The Noble Qur’an And The Effect It Had On The Companions ﷺ

Makkan Verses of the Qur’an abound with descriptions of the Hereafter. Rare are the Makkan Chapters of the Qur’an that do not contain some mention of the terrifying events that will take place on the Day of Resurrection, of the bliss that dwellers of Paradise will enjoy, of the punishment that dwellers of the Hellfire will be subjected to, of how people will be resurrected, or of how they will be judged for their deeds. So vivid is the description of the Hereafter in the Qur’an that it is as if a person

reading the Qur'an sees the Day of Resurrection with his very own eyes:

﴿وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَى فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَأَشْرَقَتِ الْأَرْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ وَجَاءَ بِالنَّبِيِّينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءَ وَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا فَتَحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمْ وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَكِن حَقَّتْ كَلِمَةُ الْعَذَابِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ قِيلَ ادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا فَبَشِّرْهُم بِمَثْوًى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾ وَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلِّمُوا عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَّبِعُوهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ ۖ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَتَرَى الْمَلَائِكَةَ حَافِيًا مِن حَوْلِ الْعَرْشِ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَقِيلَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾﴾

“They made not a just estimate of Allah such as is due to Him. And on the Day of Resurrection the whole of the earth will be grasped by His Hand and the heavens will be rolled up in His Right Hand. Gloified be He, and High is He above all that they associate as partners with Him! And the Trumpet will be blown, and all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth will swoon away, except him whom Allah will. Then it will be blown a second time and behold, they will be standing, looking on (waiting). And the earth will shine with the light of its Lord (Allah, when He will come to judge among men) and the Book will be placed (open) and the Prophets and the witnesses will be

brought forward, and it will be judged between them with truth, and they will not be wronged. And each person will be paid in full of what he did; and He is Best Aware of what they do. And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups, till, when they reach it, the gates thereof will be opened (suddenly like a prison at the arrival of the prisoners). And its keepers will say, "Did not the Messengers come to you from yourselves, - reciting to you the Verses of your Lord, and warning you of the Meeting of this Day of yours?" They will say: "Yes, but the Word of torment has been justified against the disbelievers!" It will be said (to them): "Enter you the gates of Hell, to abide therein. And (indeed) what an evil abode of the arrogant!" And those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups, till, when they reach it, and its gates will be opened (before their arrival for their reception) and its keepers will say: Salamun 'Alaikum (peace be upon you)! You have done well, so enter here to abide therein." And they will say: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah Who has fulfilled His Promise to us and has made us inherit (this) land. We can dwell in Paradise where we will; how excellent a reward for the (pious good) workers!" And you will see the angels surrounding the Throne (of Allah) from all round, glorifying the praises of their Lord (Allah). And they (all the creatures) will be judged with truth, and it will be said. All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)." (Qur'an 39: 67-75)

Many Verses of the Qur'an contain a description of Paradise: that there is nothing similar to it; that it has doors; that it has levels; that rivers flow underneath it; that it contains springs, castles, and tents; and that in it are trees of various kinds, such as *Sidratul-Muntahah* and the *Toobah* tree. Allah ﷻ also mentioned the blissful existence of the dwellers of Paradise: their food, their drink, wine, drinking vessels, clothes, jewelry, servants, speech, and women. He ﷻ even mentioned the best of what they will be given. Here are some of the qualities of Paradise that are mentioned or described in the Noble Qur'an:

1) There is nothing that is similar to Paradise

The bliss of Paradise is something that Allah ﷻ, from His boundless generosity, has prepared for His obedient slaves. We have to keep in mind that, although Allah ﷻ described for us some of the pleasures of Paradise, He ﷻ has kept hidden from us much that we cannot in this present life comprehend.

﴿فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

"No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do." (Qur'an 32: 17)

Allah ﷻ clarified the reason why His obedient slaves will be rewarded: the good deeds that He ﷻ guided them to perform, such as praying in the late hours of the night and spending for the cause of Islam. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

"Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (charity in Allah's Cause) out of what We have bestowed on them. No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do." (Qur'an 32: 16, 17)

2) The levels of Paradise

Human beings are at different levels in this world: Allah ﷻ guides some more than others, and some perform more and better deeds than others; similarly, people will be at different levels in Paradise. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَنْ يَأْتِهِ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ الصَّالِحَاتِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الدَّرَجَاتُ الْعُلَىٰ ﴿٧٥﴾﴾

"But whoever comes to Him (Allah) as a believer (in the Oneness of Allah, etc.), and has done righteous good deeds, for such are the high ranks (in the Hereafter)." (Qur'an 20: 75)

An obedient slave of Allah ﷺ will be at a level that is suitable to his *Eemaan* (faith) and piety:

﴿أَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَلِلْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَاتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا﴾ (٢١)

“See how We prefer one above another (in this world) and verily, the Hereafter will be greater in degrees and greater in preference.” (Qur’an 17: 21)

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلَتْنَاهُمْ مِنْ عَمَلِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ﴾ (٢١)

“And those who believe and whose offspring follow them in faith, – to them shall We join their offspring, and We shall not decrease the reward of their deeds in anything. Every person is a pledge for that which he has earned.” (Qur’an 52: 21)

﴿لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ عُرُفٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهَا عُرُفٌ مَّبْنِيَةٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَا يَخْلِفُ اللَّهُ الْمِعَادَ﴾ (٢٠)

“But those who fear Allah and keep their duty to their Lord (Allah), for them are built lofty rooms; one above another under which rivers flow (i.e., Paradise). (This is) the Promise of Allah: and Allah does not fail in (His) Promise.” (Qur’an 39: 20)

3) The rivers of Paradise

In many Verses of the Noble Qur’an, Allah ﷻ mentioned the rivers of Paradise:

﴿مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَنْغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ حَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِلشَّرْبِينِ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ﴾ (١٥)

“The description of Paradise which the Muttaqoon (pious) have been promised is that in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed ; rivers of milk of which the taste never changes ; rivers of wine delicious to those who drink ; and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure) therein for them is every kind of fruit ; and forgiveness from their Lord.” (Qur’an 47: 15)

4) The springs of Paradise

There are many springs in Paradise, and they vary in their taste. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤٥﴾﴾

“Truly! The Muttaqoon (pious and righteous persons) will be amidst Gardens and water-springs (Paradise).” (Qur’an 15: 45)

He ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلِّلٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤١﴾﴾

“Verily, the Muttaqoon (pious) shall be amidst shades and springs.” (Qur’an 77: 41)

Describing the two gardens that He ﷻ prepared for those who fear Him, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَّاخَتَانِ ﴿٦٦﴾﴾

“In them (both) will be two springs gushing forth water.” (Qur’an 55: 66)

In Paradise there are two springs whose water Allah’s close, obedient slaves will drink in pure, unmixed form; The *Abrar* (pious ones who fear Allah and avoid evil) will also drink from those springs, but the water they drink from will be mixed with other things. One of the two springs I am referring to is *Kafur*, and it is mentioned in this Verse:

﴿إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ﴿٥٥﴾ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ

﴿اللَّهُ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا﴾

“Verily, the *Abrar* (pious who fear Allah and avoid evil), shall drink a cup (of wine) mixed with water from a spring in Paradise called *Kafur*. A spring wherefrom the slaves of Allah will drink, causing it to gush forth abundantly.” (Qur’an 76: 5, 6)

In this Verse, we learn that the *Abrar* will drink from the spring of *Kafur* a drink that is mixed with other substances, and that the slaves of Allah ﷺ will drink *Kafur’s* water in pure form. The second spring is called *At-Tasneem*. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يُنظُرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٢٤﴾ يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْتُومٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ خِتْمُهُ مِسْكٌَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَمُرَاجِعُهُمْ فِي تَسْنِيمٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ عَيْنًا يُشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾﴾

“Verily, *Al-Abrar* (the pious ones who fear Allah and avoid evil) will be in *Delight* (Paradise). On thrones, looking (at all things). You will recognize in their faces the brightness of delight. They will be given to drink pure sealed wine. The last thereof (that wine) will be the smell of Musk, and for this let (all) those strive who want to strive (i.e., hasten earnestly to the obedience of Allah). It (that wine) will be mixed with *Tasnim*. A spring whereof drink those nearest to Allah.” (Qur’an 83: 22-28)

Another spring in Paradise we know about is called *As-Salsabil*. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا ﴿١٧﴾ عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلًا ﴿١٨﴾﴾

“And they will be given to drink there a cup (of wine) mixed with *Zanjabil* (ginger, etc.), A spring there, called *Salsabil*.” (Qur’an 76: 17, 18)

5) A description of some of the trees in Paradise

Sidrat-ul-Muntaha is a tree that Allah ﷻ informed us about in the Noble Qur’an; it was near *Sidrat-ul-Muntaha* that the Prophet ﷺ

saw Jibreel ﷺ upon his natural form – the form upon which Allah ﷻ created him. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾ عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿١٥﴾ إِذْ يَغْشَىٰ السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١٦﴾ مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

“And indeed he (Muhammad ﷺ) saw him [Jibreel (Gabriel)] at a second descent (i.e., another time). Near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha [lote-tree of the utmost boundary (beyond which none can pass)], Near it is the Paradise of Abode. When that covered the lote-tree which did cover it! The sight (of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) turned not aside (right or left), nor it transgressed beyond (the) limit (ordained for it).” (Qur’an 53: 13-17)

Then there is the *Tooba* tree, a huge tree from which garments are made for the dwellers of Paradise. Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudree ﷺ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “*Tooba*, a tree in Paradise, is the distance of 100 years (this means that it takes 100 years to traverse it, and Allah ﷻ knows best). The garments of the people of Paradise come out from its shoots.”^[1] In another narration, Abu Hurairah ﷺ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Verily, in Paradise there is a tree under whose shade a rider travels for 100 years. And recite if you wish:

﴿وَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ إِذَا دُخِرَ فِيهَا وَلَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشَّجَرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

“In shade long-extended.” (Qur’an 56: 30).^[2]

6) The Food and Drink of the people of Paradise

Allah ﷻ mentioned that Paradise contains in it every kind of food and drink that people desire:

﴿وَفِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ ثَمَرٍ أَثَرٌ ﴿٣١﴾﴾

^[1] *Silsilatul-Ahaadeeth-As-Saheehah* by Albaanee (may Allah have mercy on him): 3/639. *Hadeeth* number: 1985.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Beginning of Creation”; chapter, “What is Related About Paradise and About It Being Created.” *Hadeeth* number: 3352.

“And fruit; that they may choose.” (Qur’an 56: 20)

﴿يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِّنْ ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾﴾

“Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them (there will be) therein all that the one’s inner-selves could desire, all that the eyes could delight in, and you will abide therein forever.” (Qur’an 43: 71)

﴿كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾

“Eat and drink at ease for that which you have sent on before you in days past!” (Qur’an 69: 24)

7) The Wine in Paradise

Allah ﷻ will bless the dwellers of Paradise with wine, but certainly not the wine that people drink in this world; in fact, in many regards, it will be exactly opposite of the wine of this world. The wine of the Hereafter will be free of all of the defects that are found in the wine of this world. In this world, wine has an intoxicating and harmful effect on the mind. When people drink wine in this world, they can develop headaches, stomachaches, and other sicknesses. These are some problems associated with drinking moderate quantities of wine; the problems associated with drinking large quantities at a time are too many to enumerate here. The wine of the Hereafter is free of all of the above-mentioned problems and defects; it is in contrast a beautiful and wonderful drink. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِكَأْسٍ مِّنْ مَّعِينٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ بَيضَاءَ لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنْزَفُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾﴾

“Round them – will be passed a cup of pure wine; white, delicious to the drinkers. Neither they will have Ghou (any kind of hurt, abdominal pain, headache, a sin, etc.) from that, nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom.” (Qur’an 37: 45-47)

Describing the wine of the Hereafter in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأْسٍ مِنْ مَعِينٍ ﴿١٨﴾ لَا يُصَدَّعُونَ
عَنَّا وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

“They will be served by immortal boys, with cups, and jugs, and a glass from the flowing wine, wherefrom they will get neither any aching of the head, nor any intoxication.” (Qur’an 56: 17-19)

And in yet another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْتُومٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ خِتْمُهُ مِسْكٌَ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلَيْتَنَّافِسِ الْمُنْتَفِسُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

“They will be given to drink pure sealed wine. The last thereof (that wine) will be the smell of Musk, and for this let (all) those strive who want to strive (i.e., hasten earnestly to the obedience of Allah).” (Qur’an 83: 25, 26)

In this last Verse, Allah ﷻ informs us first that the wine they will be given is pure, and second that, while they finish drinking it, they will perceive the smell of Musk.^[1]

8) The Food and Drink of Paradise are pure, both in Entering and Exiting the Body

Paradise itself is free from purities, and so too are its dwellers. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The first group from my nation to enter Paradise will be upon the form of the moon, on the night of a full moon. Then those that follow them will be upon the light of the brightest star in the sky. Those that come after them will be of various levels. They (i.e., all of them) will neither defecate nor urinate; they will neither blow their noses (i.e., they will not have phlegm in them) nor spit.”^[2] Here, the Prophet ﷺ informs us that

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (6/514).

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Paradise”; chapter, “The First Group of People to Enter Paradise.” *Hadeeth* number: 2834. And Bukhaaree related it in the “Book of Prophets.”

the dwellers of Paradise differ from one another in terms of the strength of their light. But in another regard, they will all be similar: they will be free from all impurities – feces, urine, phlegm, etc. The food and drink they consume will turn into sweat, which has the smell of *Musk*, and which will flow from their bodies. Some of their food and drink will leave their bodies through belching, but it will be belching that is redolent of sweet and wonderful fragrances. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Verily, the dwellers of Paradise will eat and drink in Paradise. They will not, however, spit, urinate, defecate, or blow their noses.” The Prophet’s Companions ﷺ asked, “Then what will happen to their food (after they consume it)?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Belching and sweat that is like the sweat of *Musk* (the best kind of perfume).”^[1]

9) The Clothing, Jewelry, and Perfume of the Dwellers of Paradise

Attired in wonderful attire, such as clothing made of silk, the dwellers of Paradise will also be adorned with jewelry made of gold, silver, and pearls. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ﴾ (33)

“Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens) will they enter, therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments there will be of silk (i.e., in Paradise).” (Qur’an 35: 33)

In another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿عَلَيْهِمْ ثِيَابٌ سُنْدُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَحُلُّوْا أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ وَسَقَنَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا﴾ (٣١)

[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Paradise”; chapter, “Descriptions of Paradise, Its People, and Their Glorification Therein, in the Morning and the Evening.” *Hadeeth* number: 2835.

“Their garments will be of fine green silk, and gold embroidery. They will be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord will give them a pure drink.” (Qur’an 76: 21)

They will wear clothing of many different colours; for example, they will wear ‘green garments of fine and thick silk’:

﴿أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٣١﴾﴾

“These! For them will be ‘Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them, therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk. They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good is the reward, and what an excellent Murtafqa (dwelling, resting place, etc.)!” (Qur’an 18: 31)

In addition to sweating Musk from their pure bodies, the dwellers of Paradise will perfume themselves with sweet-smelling incense. Describing the dwellers of Paradise, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Their vessels (dishes, plates, utensils) are made of gold and silver, and their combs are made of gold. And the firewood of their censers (vessels in which incense is burnt) consists of sticks of perfume. And their sweat is Musk (the best kind of perfume).”^[1] Elsewhere, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ described the everlasting qualities of clothes and jewelry in Paradise: “Whoever enters Paradise will enjoy eternal bliss and will never be wretched; his clothes will not wear away, and his youth will not pass away.”^[2]

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, “The Beginning of Creation”; chapter, “What is Related About the Description of Paradise.” Hadeeth number: 3246.

^[2] Saheeh Muslim, “The Book of Paradise, Its Bliss, and Its Dwellers”; chapter, “The Eternal Bliss of Paradise’s Dwellers.” Hadeeth number: 2836.

10) The Gatherings of the people of Paradise and their Speech

The dwellers of Paradise will visit one another, and they will assemble in pleasant and good gatherings. In their conversations, they will reminisce about their worldly doings and about how Allah ﷻ blessed them by admitting them into Paradise. Allah ﷻ said of their gatherings:

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾﴾

“And We shall remove from their breasts any sense of injury (that they may have), (So they will be like) brothers facing each other on thrones.” (Qur’an 15: 47)

Allah ﷻ also informs us of some of the things that the dwellers of Paradise will say:

﴿وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلَ فِي أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَدْنَا عَذَابَ السَّمُورِ ﴿٢٧﴾ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾

“And some of them draw near to others, questioning. Saying: “Aforetime, we were afraid (of the punishment of Allah) in the midst of our families. But Allah has been gracious to us, and has saved us from the torment of the Fire. Verily, we used to invoke Him (Alone and none else) before. Verily, He is Al-Barr (the Most Subtle, Kind, Courteous, and Generous), the Most Merciful.” (Qur’an 52: 25-28)

They will even reminisce about evil people, those who would try to turn Muslims away from their faith:

﴿فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ إِنِّي كَانَ لِي قَرِينٌ ﴿٥١﴾ يَقُولُ أَتَيْتَكَ لِيَنَّ الْمَصْدِقِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ أَمْ دَا مَنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظْلًا أَمْ نَا لَمْدِينُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ قَالَ هَلْ أَنَسَ مَطْلَعُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَأُطْلِعَ فَرَّاهُ فِي سَوَاءِ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾ قَالَ تَاللَّهِ إِن كِدْتَ لَتُرْدِينِ ﴿٥٦﴾ وَلَوْلَا

نِعْمَةٌ رَبِّي لَكُنْتُ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ أَمَّا نَحْنُ بِمَيِّتِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ إِلَّا مَوْتَنَا الْأُولَىٰ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾ إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾ لِمِثْلِ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ ﴿

“Then they will turn to one another, mutually questioning. A speaker of them will say: “Verily, I had a companion (in the world), who used to say: “Are you among those who believe (in resurrection after death). (That) when we die and become dust and bones, shall we indeed (be raised up) to receive reward or punishment (according to our deeds)?” (The man) said: “Will you look down?” So he looked down and saw him in the midst of the Fire. He said: “By Allah! You have nearly ruined me. Had it not been for the Grace of my Lord, I would certainly have been among those brought forth (to Hell).” (Allah informs about that true believer that he said): “Are we then not to die (any more)? Except our first death, and we shall not be punished? (after we have entered Paradise).” Truly, this is the supreme success! For the like of this let the workers work.” (Qur’an 37: 50-61)

11) The Wives of Paradise’s Dwellers

If a believer’s wife in this world is a believer herself, then they will be husband and wife in the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾ ﴿

“Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), which they shall enter and (also) those who acted righteously from among their fathers, and their wives, and their offspring. And angels shall enter unto them from every gate.” (Qur’an 13: 23)

﴿هُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ فِي ظِلِّ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ مُتَكُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾﴾ ﴿

“They and their wives will be in pleasant shade, reclining on thrones.” (Qur’an 36: 56)

﴿أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾﴾ ﴿

“Enter Paradise, you and your wives, in happiness.” (Qur’an 43: 70)

12) *Al-Hoor Al-‘Een* (Fair Maidens of Paradise who have wide, beautiful eyes)

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كَذَلِكَ وَزَوَّجْنَهُمْ بِحُورٍ عِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

“So (it will be), and We shall marry them to Hoor ‘Een (houris-female fair ones) with wide, lovely eyes.” (Qur’an 44: 54)

In this Verse, the fair women of Paradise are called *Hoor ‘Een*, both of which words are descriptive in nature. *Hoor* is the plural of *Hooraa*, a woman whose eyes are extremely white in the white portion of her eyes, and extremely black in the black portion of her eyes. *‘Een* is the plural of *‘Ainaa*, which means: wide eyes. In the following Verse, Allah ﷻ mentions two other descriptive qualities of the *Hoor ‘Een*, that they are *Kawaa’ib* and *Atraab*:

﴿إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَارِئًا ﴿٣١﴾ حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٣﴾﴾

“Verily, for the Muttaqoon, there will be a success (Paradise); gardens and vineyards; and young full-breasted (mature) maidens of equal age.” (Qur’an 78: 31-33)

Kawaa’ib is the plural of *Kaa’ib*, which refers to a beautiful woman whose breasts protrude forward. And *Atraab* means that they will be of equal age to their male partners. Allah ﷻ created the *Hoor ‘Een* specially for Paradise:

﴿إِنَّا أَنشَأْنَهُنَّ إِنشَاءً ﴿٣٥﴾ فَعَلَّيْنَهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا ﴿٣٦﴾ عُرُبًا أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٧﴾﴾

“Verily, We have created them (maidens) of special creation. And made them virgins. Loving (their husbands only), equal in age.” (Qur’an 56: 35-37)

That they are virgins obviously means that no one before their male counterparts in Paradise had ever had sex with them:

﴿ فِيهِنَّ قَصِيرَاتٌ الْظَّرِفِ لَمْ يَطْمِئِنَّ إِسٌّ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٥٦﴾ ﴾

“Wherein both will be those (maidens) restraining their glances upon their husbands, whom no man or jinn yatmithhunna (has opened their hymens with sexual intercourse) before them.” (Qur’an 55: 56)

Allah ﷻ used various metaphors to describe the Hoor ‘Een:

﴿ وَحُورٌ عِينٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ كَأَمْثَلِ اللَّوْلِ الْمَكْنُونِ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

“And (there will be) Hoor ‘Een (houris–female fair ones) with wide, lovely eyes (as wives for the pious), like unto preserved pearls.” (Qur’an 56: 22, 23)

In this Verse, they are likened to pearls that are *Maknoon*, or hidden, protected, and preserved, pearls whose pure colour has not been changed by the light of the sun or by the handling of people. In another Verse, Allah ﷻ compares them to rubies and coral:

﴿ فِيهِنَّ قَصِيرَاتٌ الْظَّرِفِ لَمْ يَطْمِئِنَّ إِسٌّ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٥٦﴾ فَيَايَ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥٧﴾ كَأَنَّهِنَّ أَلْيَافُوتُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٥٨﴾ ﴾

“Wherein both will be those (maidens) restraining their glances upon their husbands, whom no man or jinn yatmithhunna (has opened their hymens with sexual intercourse) before them. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinns and men) deny? (In beauty) they are like rubies and coral.” (Qur’an 55: 56-58)

Rubies and corals are precious, beautiful, and valuable stones, which are wonderful to look at. The Hoor ‘Een are also described as being *Qaasirat-ut-Tarf*, which means that they have eyes for their husbands only, and not for anyone else. And so they are good and beautiful, both in the way they look and in the way they make their husbands feel.

﴿ فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَاتٌ حِسَانٌ ﴿٧٠﴾ فَيَايَ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٧١﴾ ﴾

“Therein (Gardens) will be fair (wives) good and beautiful ; Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinns and men) deny?” (Qur’an 55: 70, 71)

Unlike the women of this world, the women of Paradise are pure – pure from menstruation and post-natal bleeding, from spittle and phlegm, from urine and feces. The men of Paradise will also be pure. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The form of the first group of people to enter Paradise will be the moon, on the night of a full moon. In it (i.e., in Paradise), they (the dwellers of Paradise, men and women alike) will not spit, blow their noses, or defecate. Their vessels (dishes, plates, utensils) will be made of gold, and their combs will be made of gold and silver. (The fuel of) their censers (vessels in which incense is burnt) will be *Al-Uluwwah* (a kind of stick that one uses for perfuming oneself with incense). Their sweat is *Musk* (the best kind of perfume), and each one of them will have two wives, whose bone marrow from their legs can be seen from behind their flesh, so beautiful are they.”^[1] In another *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Were a woman from the dwellers of Paradise to overlook the people of the earth, all that is between them would be illuminated and filled with fragrance. And indeed, the veil on her head is better than the earth and all that is in it.”^[2]

13) The Best That Is Given To The Dwellers Of Paradise

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, Allah, the Blessed, the Exalted, will say, ‘Do you want something that I can give you in addition (to what I already gave you)?’ They will say, ‘Did you not whiten our faces? Did you not admit us into Paradise and save us from the Hellfire?’ He will remove the veil, and they will not have been given anything that

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Beginning of Creation”; chapter, “What is Related About the Description of Paradise and About It Being Created.” *Hadeeth* number: 3245.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, “The Book of *Jihaad* and Biographies”; chapter, “*Al-Hoor Al-Een* (The fair maidens of Paradise who have wide, beautiful eyes) and Their Description. (2796).

is more beloved to them than looking at their Lord, the Blessed, the Exalted.” At the end of one of the narrations of this *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ then recited this Verse:

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

“For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e., Paradise) and even more (i.e., having the honour of glancing at the Countenance of Allah ﷻ). Neither darkness nor dust nor any humiliating disgrace shall cover their faces. They are the dwellers of Paradise, they will abide therein forever.” (Qur’an 10: 26)^[1]

Also, Allah ﷻ will be pleased with the dwellers of Paradise, never again to become angry with them. Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudree ؓ related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Verily, Allah ﷻ will say to the people of Paradise, ‘O people of Paradise.’ And they will say, ‘Labbaik, our Lord, and Sa’daik (here we are, with continual obedience, and continually seeking to please You), and all goodness is in Your Hands.’ He will say, ‘Are you pleased?’ They will say, ‘And why should we not be pleased, O our Lord, when You have indeed given us that which You have not given to anyone else from Your creation?’ He will say, ‘Shall I not give you even better than that?’ They will say, ‘Our Lord, and what can be better than that?’ He ﷻ will say, ‘I will make incumbent upon you My Good Pleasure, so that I will never afterwards be angry with you.’”^[2]

14) The close of Their request will be: “All the praises and Thanks Be to Allah, The Lord of All that Exists.”

The believers will witness many terrifying events on the Day of Resurrection, the last of which is passing over the *Siraat* (bridge

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Faith”; chapter, “It Being Established That the Believers will See Their Lord in the Hereafter.” *Hadeeth* number: 180.

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, “The Book of Paradise, Its Description, and Its Bliss”; chapter, “The Good Pleasure (of Allah) Settles Down Upon the Believers.” *Hadeeth* number: 2829.

that is erected over the Hellfire; those that safely cross it will enter Paradise). Then, after removing from them all grief, Allah ﷻ will admit them into Paradise. Seeing what Allah ﷻ has prepared for them, they will glorify and praise Allah ﷻ:

﴿جَنَّتٌ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٤﴾﴾

“Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens) will they enter, therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments therein will be of silk (i.e., in Paradise). And they will say: “All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has removed from us (all) grief. Verily, our Lord is indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (good deeds and to recompense).” (Qur’an 35: 33, 34)

And the close of their request in the gardens of Paradise will be, “All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Lord of all that exists.”

﴿دَعْوَتُهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ ۗ وَآخِرُ دَعْوَتِهِمْ أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

“Their way of request therein will be Subhanaka Allahumma (Glory to You, O Allah!) and Salam (peace, safe from each and every evil) will be their greetings therein (Paradise)! And the close of their request will be: Al-Hamdu Lillahi Rabb-il-‘Alamin [All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists)].” (Qur’an 10: 10)

Both Allah ﷻ, in the Qur’an, and the Prophet ﷺ, through his sayings, gave a vivid description of Paradise to the Companions ﷺ, so vivid in fact that it was as if they could see Paradise before them. While a Companion read or heard Verses that described Paradise, he was made to feel that the reality of this life is in the distant past, while the reality of Paradise is in the immediate present. That the Prophet’s Companions ﷺ felt this way - mainly

because of the vivid descriptions of Paradise in the Qur'an – attests to the stylistic and linguistic miracle of the Qur'an.

For the Muslim nation to prosper, it is of the utmost importance that Muslims both clearly visualize Paradise and believe with certainty in it. When the description of Paradise becomes alive in the individuals of this nation, they will collectively work hard to please Allah ﷻ, making any sacrifice that is necessary along the way; and they will no longer feel weak or fear death. In fact, the many military victories that Muslims enjoyed throughout history were achieved through many reasons, one of the most important of which was a desire, on the part of generals and soldiers alike, to become martyred in the way of Allah ﷻ and to consequently enter Paradise.

A Description Of The Hellfire In The Noble Qur'an And The Effect That Had On The Prophet's Companions ﷺ

The Companions ﷺ hoped from Allah ﷻ but they feared Him as well, for just as the Qur'an contained vivid descriptions of Paradise, so too did it contain rich and intense descriptions of the Hellfire. In addition to the Hellfire, the terrifying events concerned with the end of this world and the Day of Resurrection are also treated in the Qur'an – the destruction of the earth, the crumbling of the mountains, the scattering of the stars, etc. The terrors that the disbelievers will be subjected to are also detailed in the Qur'an – their humiliation, wretchedness, and painful torment. Many Verses of the Qur'an remind people that they will be accountable and will pay a heavy penalty for all of the wrongs they perpetrated against others; masters will be pitted against slaves, leaders against their citizens, murderers against those they murdered, disbelievers against *Shaitaan* – and even a person against his very own limbs, which will attest to the wrongs he did. The Qur'an informs us of how the disbelievers will enter the Hellfire, of how both hypocrites and believers will pass over *As-Siraat* (a bridge that is erected over the Hellfire), and of how only the believers will then be saved. All of these themes and

topics had a profound effect on the souls of the Prophet's Companions. As for the Hellfire and the punishments that will be meted out to people in it, the Qur'an provides a clear and rich description of both. Here are some of the things we learn about regarding the Hellfire from the Noble Qur'an:

1) The Food, Drink, and Clothing of Hell's Denizens

a) No one in this world can imagine just how vile the food is in the Hellfire; what is more, the denizens of the Hellfire will have no choice but to eat what is given to them. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيحٍ ۖ لَا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنْ جُوعٍ ۖ﴾ (٧)

"No food will there be for them but a poisonous thorny plant, which will neither nourish nor avail against hunger." (Qur'an 88: 6, 7)

People eat food for nourishment and for pleasure, but the food of the Hellfire will neither nourish nor give pleasure; rather, it will be a form of torture and punishment. Other than a poisonous thorny plant, they will also have to eat from a tree called *Zaqqum*:

﴿إِنَّ شَجَرَةَ الزَّقُّومِ ۖ طَعَامٌ الْأَثِيمِ ۖ كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ ۖ كَغَلِيِّ الْحَمِيمِ ۖ﴾ (٤٤-٤٦)

"Verily, the tree of Zaqqum, will be the food of the sinners, like boiling oil, it will boil in the bellies, like the boiling of scalding water." (Qur'an 44: 43-46)

Allah ﷻ made reference to the *Zaqqum* tree in other Verses as well:

﴿أَذَلِكْ خَيْرٌ نَزْلًا أَمْ شَجَرَةُ الزَّقُّومِ ۗ﴾ (٦٢)

"Is that (Paradise) better entertainment or the tree of Zaqqum (a horrible tree in Hell)?" (Qur'an 37: 62)

﴿ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا الضَّالُّونَ الْمَكْذِبُونَ ۖ لَأَكَلُونَ مِنْ شَجَرٍ مِّنْ زَقُّومٍ ۖ فَمَالُوا مِنْهَا ۖ الْبُطُونِ ۖ فَشَرِبُوا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ۖ فَشَرِبُوا شُرْبَ الْهَيْمِ ۖ﴾ (٥١-٥٥)

“Then moreover, verily, – you the erring-ones, the deniers (of Resurrection)! You verily will eat of the trees of Zaqqum. Then you will fill your bellies therewith. And drink boiling water on top of it. So you will drink (that) like thirsty camels!” (Qur’an 56: 51-55)

From these Verses we learn that the *Zaqqum* tree is indeed a most foul and vile thing; its roots are found in the bottom of the Hellfire, while its shoots and branches spread out over all parts of the Hellfire. The fruits of *Zaqqum* are ugly to look at, which is why they are compared to the heads of devils. And although we haven’t seen devils with our eyes, we, by our very nature, know them to be horribly ugly, just as we know angels to be beautiful. Despite the ugliness in appearance and foulness in taste of those fruits, the people of the Hellfire will become so hungry that they will be forced to eat them; in fact, they will fill their stomachs with the fruits of *Zaqqum*. When their stomachs are filled with the fruits of *Zaqqum*, the fruits will begin to boil like burning oil. The pain they will then feel is immense, beyond what we can now express in words. When they find themselves to be in this wretched state, they will hurry to *Al-Hameem*, boiling water that reaches the extreme of hotness, and they will drink from it like thirsty camels. *Al-Hameem* is so hot that it will cut up their bowels. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِنْ مَاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ لَبَنٍ لَمْ يَنْغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ خَمْرٍ لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ عَسَلٍ مُصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

“The description of Paradise which the Muttaqoon (the pious) have been promised (is that) in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed, rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure); therein for them is every kind of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord. (Are these) like

those who shall dwell for ever in the Fire, and be given, to drink, boiling water, so that it cuts up their bowels?" (Qur'an 47: 15)

When the denizens of Hell eat the vile food described above, they will choke on it, because it is so foul and disgusting:

﴿إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَحَجِيمًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾﴾

"Verily, with Us are fetters (to bind them), and a raging Fire. And a food that chokes, and a painful torment." (Qur'an 73: 12, 13)

Another kind of food that the denizens of Hell will eat is *Ghisleen*:

﴿فَلَيْسَ لَهُ الْيَوْمَ هَاهُنَا حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غَسِيلِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ لَا يَأْكُلُهُمْ إِلَّا الْخَاطِئُونَ

﴿٣٧﴾﴾

"So no friend has he here this Day, nor any food except filth from the washing of wounds (Ghisleen). None will eat except the Khati'un (sinners, disbelievers, polytheists, etc.)." (Qur'an 69: 35-37)

In another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَٰخَرُ مِنْ شَكْلِهِ أَزْوَاجٌ﴾

"And other (torments) of similar kind – all together!." (Qur'an 38: 58)

Ghassaaq in this last Verse and *Ghisleen* mean the same thing: the pus that flows from the wounded flesh of Hell's inhabitants. Some maintain that *Ghisleen* and *Ghassaaq* refer to the discharge that flows from the private parts of fornicating women and from the rotten flesh of the disbelievers. Al-Qurtubee said that they are "the juices that (flow from the bodies) of Hell's denizens."

b) They will have different kinds of drink: *Al-Hameem*, *Al-Ghassaaq*, *Al-Muhl*, and *As-Sadeed*. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وَعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِنْ مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ لَبَنٍ لَمْ يَنْغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ حَمْرٍ لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّرِيبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ عَسَلٍ مُصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ

كُلِّ الشَّرَبِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

“The description of Paradise which the Muttaqoon (the pious) have been promised (is that) in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed, rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure); therein for them is every kind of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord. (Are these) like those who shall dwell for ever in the Fire, and be given, to drink, boiling water, so that it cuts up their bowels?” (Qur’an 47: 15)

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ فَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِن وَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِن يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾﴾

“And say: “The truth is from your Lord.” Then whosoever wills, let him believe; and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily, We have prepared for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah). And if they ask for help (relief, water, etc.) they will be granted water like boiling oil that will scald their faces. Terrible the drink, and an evil Murtafaqa (dwelling, resting, place, etc.)!” (Qur’an 18: 29)

﴿مَنْ وَرَّأَيْهِ جَهَنَّمَ وَسُقِيَ مِنْ مَّاءٍ صَٰدِرٍ ۖ يَبْجَرَعُهُ وَلَا يُكَادُّهُ يُسِغُهُ وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَحِيَّتٍ ۖ وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

“In front of him (every obstinate, arrogant dictator) is Hell, and he will be made to drink boiling, festering water. He will sip it unwillingly, and he will find a great difficulty to swallow it down his throat, and death will come to him from every side, yet he will not die and in front of him, will be a great torment.” (Qur’an 14: 16, 17)

﴿ هَذَا فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَعَسَاقٌ ﴾ ﴿٥٧﴾

“This is so! Then let them taste it, – a boiling fluid and dirty wound discharges.” (Qur’an 38: 57)

These Verses mention four kinds of drinks that will be consumed by the denizens of Hell: First, *Al-Hameem*, which is boiling hot water that reaches the pinnacle of hotness; second, *Al-Ghassaaq*, which we discussed in the previous section about the food that Hellfire’s denizens will eat – so it is discussed as both a kind of food and a kind of drink; third, *As-Sadeed*, which refers to what flows from the meat and skin of disbelievers; and fourth, *Al-Muhl*, which is like burning oil: when one comes near to it, one’s scalp falls off.

c) As for the clothing that the denizens of Hell will wear, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ وَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقْرَنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ﴾ ﴿٤٩﴾ سَرَائِلُهُمْ مِنْ قَطِرَانٍ
وَتَغْشَى وُجُوهُهُمُ النَّارُ ﴿٥٠﴾

“And you will see the Mujrimoon (criminals, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism, polytheists, disobedient to Allah, etc.) that Day bound together in fetters; (Muqarranoon in fetters; mean: – with their hands and feet tied to their necks with chains.) Their garments will be of pitch (Qatiraan), and fire will cover their faces.” (Qur’an 14: 49, 50)

Qatiraan, the clothing they will wear, means molten copper (or perhaps tar).

2) Punishment in the Hellfire

a) Varying degrees of punishment.

Just as the dwellers of Paradise will be at different levels, each enjoying a level of pleasure that is in accordance with his ranking and deeds, so too will the denizens of Hell be at various levels. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾﴾

“The Fire; they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon, and on the Day when the Hour will be established (it will be said to the angels): “Cause Fir’aun’s (Pharaoh) people to enter the severest torment!” (Qur’an 40: 46)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ زِدْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا فَوْقَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يُفْسِدُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾﴾

“Those who disbelieved and hinder (men) from the Path of Allah, for them We will add torment over the torment; because they used to spread corruption [by disobeying Allah themselves, as well as ordering others (mankind) to do so].” (Qur’an 16: 88)

And the Prophet ﷺ described the punishment of those who will be in the shallowest part of the Hellfire: “Verily, from the dwellers of Hell who will be least punished on the Day of Resurrection is a man who will have live coal placed on the sole of his feet, and as a result of that, his brain will boil.”^[1]

b) They will be gathered together on their faces, and the Hellfire will burn their faces.

One of the ways in which Allah ﷻ will humiliate the disbelievers is that He ﷻ will “gather them together on the Day of Resurrection on their faces - blind, dumb, and deaf.” Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِن دُونِهِ وَيَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمِيَٰ وَبِكُمَا وَصَمًا مَّا أُوتِيَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ كُلَّمَا خَبَتْ زِدْنَاهُمْ سَعِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾﴾

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, “The Book of Raqaaiq’; chapter, “The Description of Paradise and the Hellfire.” Hadeeth number: 6561.

“And he whom Allah guides, he is led aright; but he whom He sends astray – for such you will find no Auliya’ (helpers and protectors, etc.), besides Him, and We shall gather them together on the Day of Resurrection on their faces, blind, dumb and deaf, their abode will be Hell; whenever it abates, We shall increase for them the fierceness of the Fire.” (Qur’an 17: 97)

And then they will be thrown on their faces into the Hellfire:

﴿وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَكَبَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾﴾

“And whoever brings an evil (deed) (i.e., Shirk – polytheism, disbelief in the Oneness of Allah and every evil sinful deed), they will be cast down (prone) on their faces in the Fire. (And it will be said to them) “Are you being recompensed anything except what you used to do?” (Qur’an 27: 90)

Then, in the Hellfire, nothing will shield even their faces from the Hellfire:

﴿تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهُهُمْ النَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾﴾

“The Fire will burn their faces, and therein they will grin, with displaced lips (disfigured).” (Qur’an 23: 104)

c) They will be dragged.

One of the punishments that the denizens of Hell will be subjected to is that they will be dragged on their faces in the Hellfire. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعْرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾ يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُقُوا مَسَّ سَقَرٍ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾

“Verily, the Mujrimoon (polytheists, disbelievers, sinners, criminals, etc.) are in error (in this world) and will burn (in the Hellfire in the Hereafter). The Day they will be dragged in the Fire on their faces (it will be said to them): “Taste you the touch of

Hell!" (Qur'an 54: 47, 48)

That they are chained with iron collars over their necks indicates that the pain they will feel from being dragged on their faces will intensify:

﴿الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِالْكِتَابِ وَمِمَّا أَرْسَلْنَا بِهِ رُسُلَنَا فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ إِذِ الْأَغْلُلُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلْسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ فِي الْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِي النَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

"Those who deny the Book (this Qur'an), and that with which We sent Our Messengers (i.e., to worship none but Allah Alone sincerely, and to reject all false deities and to confess resurrection after the death for recompense) they will come to know (when they will be cast into the Fire of Hell). When iron collars will be rounded over their necks, and the chains, they shall be dragged along. In the boiling water, then they will be burned in the Fire." (Qur'an 40: 70-72)

d) Their faces will be blackened.

In the Hereafter, Allah ﷻ will cause the faces of Hell's denizens to turn extremely black, so that it will seem as if the darkness of the night has settled on their faces. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَسَبُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ جَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ بِمِثْلِهَا وَتَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ مِمَّا هُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ عَاصِرٍ كَأَنَّمَا أُغْشِيَتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ قِطْعًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مُظْلِمًا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

"And those who have earned evil deeds, the recompense of an evil deed is the like thereof, and humiliating disgrace will cover them (their faces). No defender will they have from Allah. Their faces will be covered, as it were, with pieces from the darkness of night. They are dwellers of the Fire, they will abide therein forever." (Qur'an 10: 27)

e) The Hellfire will encompass them.

Since the sins of a disbeliever encompass him like a bracelet around a wrist, and since the reward should be appropriate to the deed, the Hellfire will encompass him from all directions. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَهُمْ مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ مِهَادٌ وَمِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ غَوَاشٍ ۚ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤١﴾﴾

“Theirs will be a bed of Hell (Fire), and over them coverings (of Hellfire). Thus do We recompense the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.).” (Qur’an 7: 41)

What this means is that the Hellfire will encompass them from both beneath and above. Allah ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿يَوْمَ يَغْشَاهُمْ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ وَيَقُولُ ذُوقُوا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾﴾

“On the Day when the torment (Hellfire) shall cover them from above them and from underneath their feet, and it will be said: “Taste what you used to do.” (Qur’an 29: 55)

And in yet another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهُ بِهِ عِبَادَهُ ۗ يُعْبَادُونَ فَاتَّقُونِ ﴿١٦﴾﴾

“They shall have coverings of Fire, above them and covering (of Fire) beneath them; with this Allah does frighten His slaves: “O My slaves, therefore fear Me!” (Qur’an 39: 16)

Elsewhere in the Qur’an, Allah ﷻ made a more explicit mention of how the Hellfire will encompass the disbelievers, explaining that the Hellfire has walls that surround the disbelievers, so that they are not able to leave:

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ ۗ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفِرْ ۗ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهَا مِنْ سُرَادِقُهَا ۗ وَإِنْ يَسْتَعِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ ۗ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾﴾

“And say: “The truth is from your Lord.” Then whosoever wills, let him believe, and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily, We have prepared for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah). And if they ask for help (relief, water, etc.) they will be granted water like boiling oil, that will scald their faces. Terrible the drink, and an evil Murtafaqa (dwelling, resting place, etc.)!” (Qur’an 18: 29)

f) The Hellfire will leap up over their hearts:

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ كَلَّا لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ۚ ﴿٤﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ﴿٥﴾ نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْقَدَةُ ﴿٦﴾ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ ﴿٧﴾ ﴾

“Nay! Verily, he will be thrown into the crushing Fire. And what will make you know what the crushing Fire is? The fire of Allah, kindled, which leaps up over the hearts.” (Qur’an 104: 4-7)

g) The fetters, chains, and collars that will restrain them in the Hellfire.

Allah ﷻ has prepared iron chains and collars for the people of the Hellfire:

﴿ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَلَاسِلًا وَأَغْلَالًا وَسَعِيرًا ﴿٤﴾ ﴾

“Verily, We have prepared for the disbelievers iron chains, iron collars, and a blazing Fire.” (Qur’an 76: 4)

﴿ إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَحَجِيمًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصْبَةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

“Verily, with Us are fetters (to bind them), and a raging Fire. And a food that chokes, and a painful torment.” (Qur’an 73: 12, 13)

Iron collars will be placed around their necks:

﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعِفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا بَلْ مَكْرُ الْأَيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذْ تَأْمُرُونَا

أَنْ تَكْفُرَ بِاللَّهِ وَتَجْعَلَ لَهُ أَنْدَادًا وَأَسْرُوا النَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَعْتَلَّ فِي أَعْنَاقِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

“Those who were deemed weak will say to those who were arrogant: “Nay, but it was your plotting by night and day, when you ordered us to disbelieve in Allah and set up rivals to Him!” And each of them (parties) will conceal their own regrets (for disobeying Allah during this worldly life), when they behold the torment. And We shall put iron collars round the necks of those who disbelieved. Are they requited aught except what they used to do?” (Qur’an 34: 33)

﴿إِذِ الْأَعْتَلُّ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلْسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿٧١﴾﴾

“When iron collars will be rounded over their necks, and the chains, they shall be dragged along.” (Qur’an 40: 71)

Just as criminals are tied up in this world:

﴿إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا﴾

“Verily, with Us are fetters (to bind them), and a raging Fire.” (Qur’an 73: 12)

Criminals in the Hereafter will be tied up as well, except with sturdier, tighter, longer – and generally more terrifying chains. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ﴿٣٠﴾ ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ ﴿٣١﴾ ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ﴿٣٢﴾﴾

“(It will be said): “Seize him and fetter him; then throw him in the blazing Fire. Then fasten him with a chain whereof the length is seventy cubits!” (Qur’an 69: 30-32)

h) A disbeliever will be united in the Hellfire with the false deity that he worshipped and with his companion from the devils.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَرَدُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾ لَوْ كَانَتْ هَتُؤَلَاءِ ءَالِهَةً مَا وَرَدُوهَا وَكُلٌّ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾﴾

“Certainly! You (disbelievers) and that which you are worshipping now besides Allah, are (but) fuel for Hell! (Surely), you will enter it. Had these (idols, etc.) been aliha (gods), they would not have entered there (Hell), and all of them will abide therein.” (Qur’an 21: 98, 99)

And in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُهُتَدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَنَا قَالَ يَا لَيْتَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ بُعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَبِئْسَ الْقَرِينُ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَلَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ إِذْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾﴾

“And whosoever turns away (blinds himself) from the remembrance of the Most Beneficent (Allah) (i.e., this Qur’an and worship of Allah), We appoint for him Shaitaan (Satan – devil) to be a Qarin (an intimate companion) to him. And verily, they (Satans/devils) hinder them from the Path (of Allah), but they think that they are guided aright! Till, when (such a one) comes to Us, he says [to his Qarin (Satan/devil companion)] “Would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts (or the east and west)” – a worst (type of) companion (indeed)! It will profit you not this Day (O you who turn away from Allah’s Remembrance and His worship, etc.) as you did wrong, (and) that you will be sharers (you and your Qarin) in the punishment.” (Qur’an 43: 36-39)

i) Their grief, regret, and supplication.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِكُلِّ نَفْسٍ ظَلَمَتْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لَافْتَدَتْ بِهِ وَأَسْرُوا النَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ وَقُضِيَٰ بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

“And if every person who had wronged (by disbelieving in Allah and by worshipping others besides Allah), possessed all that is on earth, and sought to ransom himself therewith (it will not be accepted), and they would feel in their hearts regret when they see the torment, and they will be judged with justice, and no wrong will be done unto them.” (Qur’an 10: 54)

When the disbeliever looks at his scroll of deeds, when he sees in it the disbelief that qualifies him for eternity in the Hellfire, he will supplicate for his own destruction:

﴿وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ ﴿١٠﴾ فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا ثُبُورًا ﴿١١﴾ وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾﴾

“But whosoever is given his Record behind his back, he will invoke (his) destruction, and shall enter a blazing Fire, and made to taste its burning.” (Qur’an 84: 10-12)

Then again, when he is thrown into the Hellfire, he will invoke for his own destruction:

﴿وَإِذَا أُلْقُوا مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُّقْرَنِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورًا ﴿١٣﴾ لَا تَدْعُوا الْيَوْمَ ثُبُورًا وَاحِدًا وَاَدْعُوا ثُبُورًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٤﴾﴾

“And when they shall be thrown into a narrow place thereof, chained together, they will exclaim therein for destruction. Exclaim not today for one destruction, but exclaim for many destructions.” (Qur’an 25: 13, 14)

When inside the Hellfire, he will scream loudly and wail pathetically, but he will also invoke his Lord, hoping that He will take him out of the Hellfire:

﴿وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِحُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ ﴿٢٦﴾ أَوَلَمْ نَعْمَرْكُمْ مَا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمْ النَّذِيرُ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

“Therein they will cry: “Our Lord! Bring us out, we shall do righteous good deeds, not (the evil deeds) that we used to do.”

(Allah will reply): "Did We not give you lives long enough, so that whosoever would receive admonition, – could receive it? And the warner came to you. So taste you (the evil of your deeds). For the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) there is no helper." (Qur'an 35: 37)

He will, at that time, fully acknowledge his disbelief, his foolish deeds, and the sorry use he made of his mind:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

"And they will say: "Had we but listened or used our intelligence, we would not have been among the dwellers of the blazing Fire!" (Qur'an 67: 10)

But his excuses and pledges of reform will be too little, too late. His requests will be rejected with a sense of finality and severity that will cause all hopes of a better condition to vanish from his heart. He will be given an answer that shows him his true worth:

﴿قَالُوا رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ قَالَ أَخْسُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾﴾

"They will say: "Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people. Our Lord! Bring us out of this; if ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be Zaalimoon: (polytheists, oppressors, unjust, and wrongdoers, etc.)." He (Allah) will say: "Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me!" (Qur'an 23: 106-108)

Because of his disbelief on earth, there is no return from the destination he will have reached: supplication will be useless and hope will never again be of any avail.

﴿وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُوا رُءُوسِهِمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ رَبَّنَا أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَارْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًىهَا وَلَكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ فَذُوقُوا﴾

بِمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا إِنَّا نَسِينَكُمْ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْخُلْدِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

“And if you only could see when the Mujrimoon (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, etc.) shall hang their heads before their Lord (saying): “Our Lord! We have now seen and heard, so send us back (to the world), we will do righteous good deeds. Verily! We now believe with certainty.” And if We had willed, surely! We would have given every person his guidance, but the Word from Me took effect (about evildoers), that I will fill Hell with jinn and mankind together. Then taste you (the torment of the Fire) because of your forgetting the Meeting of this Day of yours, (and) surely! We too will forget you, so taste you the abiding torment for what you used to do.” (Qur’an 32: 12-14)

He and the other denizens of Hell will no longer address Allah ﷻ, but will instead implore the custodians of Hell to help them, to intercede on their behalf, so that Allah ﷻ will reduce for them their punishment.

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ فِي النَّارِ لِخَزَنَةِ جَهَنَّمَ ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ يُخَفِّفْ عَنَّا يَوْمًا مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ ۗ ﴿٤٩﴾ قَالُوا أَوْلَمْ نَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلَكُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَالُوا فَاذْعَبُوا وَمَا دُعَاؤُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ ۗ ﴿٥٠﴾﴾

“And those in the Fire will say to the keepers (angels) of Hell: “Call upon your Lord to lighten for us the torment for a day!” They will say: “Did there not come to you, your Messengers with (clear) evidences and signs? They will say: “Yes.” They will reply: “Then call (as you like)! And the invocation of the disbelievers is nothing but in error!” (Qur’an 40: 49-50)

They will then invoke Maalik, the custodian of Hell, asking for their destruction, so that, if their situation cannot improve as long as they remain alive, at least their punishment will come to an end. But Maalik’s answer will only confirm their worst fear:

﴿وَنَادُوا يَمْلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَكِيدُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ لَقَدْ جِئْنَاكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَادِرُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾﴾

“And they will cry: “O Maalik (Keeper of Hell)! Let your Lord make an end of us.” He will say: “Verily you shall abide forever.” Indeed We have brought the truth (Muhammad ﷺ) with the Qur’an), – to you, but most of you have a hatred for the truth.” (Qur’an 43: 77, 78)

By choosing disbelief over belief, the disbelievers lose their own selves and their families. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَلَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “The losers are those who will lose themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection. Verily, that will be a manifest loss!” (Qur’an 39: 15)

As we have seen from the previous two sections, Makkan Verses of the Qur’an trained Muslims to hope for Allah’s reward and to fear His punishment. Like the eternal bliss of Paradise, the punishment of Hell is real, both in the physical and mental sense. Based on the descriptions they found in the Qur’an and heard from the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions ﷺ constantly pictured the gardens of Paradise and the pits of the Hellfire; needless to say, such constant visualization had a profound effect on their characters. They made preparations for death, knowing fully well that it is an inevitable end for all human life in this world, that they will all be questioned as individuals, and that the grave is either a garden from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the pits of Hell. When a given Companion ﷺ reflected on these realities, he feared Allah ﷻ in his heart, and he went about his daily activities with the knowledge that Allah ﷻ has full knowledge of all his doings. This knowledge would prompt him to invoke Allah ﷻ openly and secretly, asking Him ﷻ to

honour him with the companionship of the Prophets ﷺ, the truthful ones, the martyrs, and the righteous ones.

These days, those who are striving to improve the state of our nation need to understand with the same intelligence and visualize with the same clearness the realities of the Hereafter – of Paradise and Hell. It is only then that the Muslim nation can regain its honour and status among the nations.

Faith In Divine Preordainment (Al-Qadaa Wal-Qadr)

Many Makkan Verses of the Qur'an focus on faith in Divine Preordainment. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴿٤٩﴾ ﴾

“Verily, We have created all things with Qadar (Divine Preordainments of all things before their creation, as written in the Book of Decrees – Al-Lauh AL-Mahfooz).” (Qur'an 54: 49)

And in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمَلِكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ مَقْدِيرًا ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

“He to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and Who has begotten no son (children or offspring) and for Whom there is no partner in the dominion. He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements.” (Qur'an 25: 2)

The Prophet ﷺ would teach his Companions ﷺ about Divine Preordainment, explaining to them that Allah ﷻ has already decreed all that happens in this world. And the Noble Qur'an clarified for them the four levels or aspects of Divine Preordainment:

- 1) Allah's knowledge is comprehensive of all things, which of course includes events that happened in the past, that are happening now, and that will happen in the future. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُوا مِنْهُ مِنْ قُرْآنٍ وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّكَ مِنْ مِثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١١﴾﴾

“Whatever you (O Muhammad ﷺ) may be doing, and whatever portion you may be reciting from the Qur’an, – and whatever deed you (mankind) may be doing (good or evil), We are Witness thereof, when you are doing it. And nothing is hidden from your Lord (so much as) the weight of an atom (or small ant) on the earth or in the heaven. Nor what is less than that or what is greater than that but is (written) in a Clear Record.” (Qur’an 10: 61)

- 2) Even before creating mankind, Allah ﷻ wrote down everything that was to happen:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَرَهُمْ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

“Verily, We give life to the dead, and We record that which they send before (them), and their traces [their footsteps and walking on the earth with their legs to the mosques for the five compulsory congregational prayers, Jihaad (holy fighting in Allah’s Cause), and all other good and evil they did, and that which they leave behind], and all things We have recorded with numbers (as a record) in a Clear Book.” (Qur’an 36: 12)

- 3) Whatever Allah ﷻ wills, happens; He ﷻ has power over all things. So no matter how hard one tries to ward off *Al-Qadr*, and no matter how many people work as a team to do the same, what Allah ﷻ has decreed will certainly come to pass. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أُولَٰئِكَ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَكُنُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعْجِزَهُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا ﴿٤٤﴾﴾

“Have they not traveled in the land, and seen what was the end of those before them, and they were superior to them in power? Allah is not such that anything in the heavens or in the earth escapes Him. Verily, He is All-Knowing, All-Omnipotent.” (Qur’an 35: 44)

4) Allah ﷻ is the Creator of all things:

﴿ذَٰلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَأَعْبُدُوهُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾﴾

“Such is Allah, your Lord! La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Creator of all things. So worship Him (Alone), and He is the Wakil (Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian, etc.) over all things.” (Qur’an 6: 102)

Having strong faith in Divine Preordainment bore many fruits for the Companions ﷺ – in terms of an improvement in character, blessings in this world, and reward in the Hereafter. If we too have faith in Divine Preordainment, we will, *In Sha Allah*, enjoy the same fruits and blessings, some of which are as follows:

- 1) The fulfillment of one’s duty to worship Allah ﷻ: By having faith in Divine Preordainment – one of the six pillars of *Eemaan* – and by acting according to the implications of that faith, one is worshipping Allah ﷻ, which is the purpose for which mankind was created.
- 2) Faith in Divine Preordainment helps save one from *Shirk* (associating partners with Allah in worship). One who believes in Divine Preordainment believes that only Allah ﷻ can harm or benefit, honour or humiliate, raise or demote. This knowledge helps the believer to stay far away from *Shirk*.
- 3) A person who correctly believes in Divine Preordainment becomes brave and courageous, since he knows that he will not die when another person wants him to die, but only when Allah ﷻ has decreed for him to die.

- 4) Patience and a willingness to endure hardships for future rewards: When one believes in Divine Preordainment, one knows for certain that the tests of life ultimately come not from one's antagonists or from a random series of coincidences, but instead from Allah ﷻ. With this knowledge and belief, the true believer knows that, if he patiently endures the trials and hardships of life, Allah ﷻ will reward him with a reward that is much greater than the patience and sacrifices that are required of him; on the other hand, when one believes that the tests and trials of life are random coincidences, one won't feel that one has a strong reason to be patient and endure hardships with steadfastness.
- 5) A restful, peaceful heart: When one knows that it is upon him to strive and that it is for Allah ﷻ to decree results, one will not feel restless or agitated when things go contrary to his plans. Such a person knows that Allah ﷻ is Most Merciful and Most Just; therefore, whatever He ﷻ decrees for His slaves is what is best for them. A heart and mind that are at peace is what every person desires, but only those who have faith in Divine Preordainment can achieve that sense of peace to its fullest degree; and since the Companions ؓ had stronger faith than those who came after them – in all of the pillars of *Eemaan*, Divine Preordainment included – it follows that they had a greater degree of peace of mind.
- 6) Contentment, self-dignity, and freedom from servitude to created beings: A believer of Divine Preordainment knows that his sustenance is in the Hand of Allah ﷻ, Who provides for him and is sufficient for him. He also knows that he will not die until he receives in full amount the sustenance that Allah ﷻ has decreed for him. So no matter how hard it is that others try to provide him with or prevent him from sustenance, they will only be able to do that which Allah ﷻ has decreed for them to do. A sense of contentment is the resultant of such knowledge. Rather than hope for help from another human being, the believer expects and hopes for help from Allah ﷻ alone. The

fruits of having faith in Divine Preordainment are many; the few I have mentioned here are meant only as examples and not as a comprehensive list.

In cultivating the beliefs and manners of his Companions ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ did not solely teach them about the six pillars of *Eemaan*. He ﷺ also cultivated their outlook and views on many issues – such as the beliefs they held about man, life, and the universe. The overall purpose of the Prophet’s teachings was to make human beings perceive their purpose in life, to truly fulfill the duties that Allah ﷻ charged them with, and to achieve freedom from false notions and beliefs.

The Companions ﷺ Understood The Reality Of Man’s Worth And Role In The Universe

After it acquainted man with his Lord, the Noble Qur’an also acquainted man with his own self, by answering some questions that occur naturally to man, such as: where did I come from? And, where am I heading? Questions such as these occur with a great sense of urgency in all human beings.

The Noble Qur’an clarified the reality of man’s development – what he came from, where he will be returning, what is required from him in life, and where his destination is after death. The Companions ﷺ learned that the original makeup of man is water and clay; they learned about their early development from male sperm; and they learned about their status and noble ranking with their Lord – for did not Allah ﷻ honour mankind over other kinds of created beings, and did not Allah ﷻ order the angels to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ? They understood from what they learned that man must be in a state of equilibrium between a lower and higher extreme: Because of his status and nobility, man should see himself as being dignified, but because of his beginnings – from male sperm – he should be humble, and he should glorify the One Who raised him from those beginnings to the heights of honour and nobility. With this understanding, one

becomes saved from pride, arrogance, and conceitedness; yet at the same time one's honour and nobility prevent one from showing servitude of any kind to anyone other than Allah ﷻ. Had Allah ﷻ left man without guidance, man would have developed a great deal of misunderstanding about his own self, by thinking of himself as being either too great or too small and vile; in fact, many people have gone to these two extremes, simply because they do not follow divine guidance.

The way in which man perceives himself, his status, his purpose, and his role in the universe obviously has a great impact on his character. Since man was created, he has misunderstood himself, sometimes giving himself more importance than he is worthy of, and sometimes considering himself to be more unimportant and unworthy than he really is. When the former happens, he thinks that he is at the center of the universe and that he is great. As Allah ﷻ informs us in the Qur'an, this is what happened to the people of 'Ad:

﴿فَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا
أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

"As for 'Ad, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: "Who is mightier than us in strength?" See they not that Allah, Who created them was mightier in strength than them. And they used to deny Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, revelations, etc.)!" (Qur'an 41: 15)

The same happened to Fir'aun:

﴿فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى ﴿٢٤﴾﴾

"Saying: "I am your lord, most high." (Qur'an 79: 24)

People who overestimate their worth think that they are far too great to be held accountable by anyone. On the other extreme, man sometimes thinks himself to be the most unworthy creature in the universe. He then begins to bow his head down before trees, rocks, rivers, mountains, or animals; he thinks that the only

way he can achieve safety in this life is to perform prostration to the moon or to the sun.

In the Noble Qur'an, Allah ﷻ clearly mentioned that the reality of man returns to two origins, one that took place long ago, which refers to when man was first created from clay; and one that took place recently, and it continues to take place with the birth of every human being, and this refers to man's creation from male semen. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ طِينٍ ۗ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِّنْ مَّاءٍ مَّهِينٍ ۚ ثُمَّ سَوَّاهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِنْ رُّوحِهِ ۗ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۗ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ۙ﴾ (9)

"Who made everything He has created good, and He began the creation of man from clay. Then He made his offspring from semen of worthless water (male and female sexual discharge). Then He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him the soul (created by Allah for that person), and He gave you hearing (ears), sight (eyes), and hearts). Little is the thanks you give!" (Qur'an 32: 7-9)

Verses that contain a similar meaning abound in the Qur'an.

The Qur'an also abounds with mention of how Allah ﷻ honoured mankind; such Verses had a most salutary effect on the minds of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ. The Qur'an mentions different ways in which Allah ﷻ honoured mankind:

1) Allah ﷻ bestowed honour upon man by creating him with His own two Hands:

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰئِكَةِ إِنِّي خَلَقْتُ بَشَرًا مِّنْ طِينٍ ۗ (٧١) فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ۗ (٧٢) فَسَجَدَ الْمَلٰئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ۗ (٧٣) إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ ۗ اسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِينَ ۗ (٧٤) قَالَ يَآٰئِيلِسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإِيْدِي ۗ (٧٥) اسْتَكْبَرْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعٰلِينَ ۗ﴾ (70)

“(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels: “Truly, I am going to create man from clay.” So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him (his) soul created by Me, then you fall down prostrate to him.” So the angels prostrated themselves, all of them: Except Iblis (Satan) he was proud and was one of the disbelievers. (Allah) said: “O Iblis (Satan)! What prevents you from prostrating yourself to one whom I have created with Both My Hands. Are you too proud (to fall prostrate to Adam) or are you one of the high exalted?” (Qur’an 38: 71-75)

In these Verses, Allah ﷻ points to the lofty ranking of the soul that resides in man. After He ﷻ created the first man, Allah ﷻ honoured him with a great welcome from the company of angels, commanding the angels to perform prostration to him:

﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُن مِّنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿١١﴾﴾

“And surely, We created you (your father Adam) and then gave you shape (the noble shape of a human being), then We told the angels, “Prostrate to Adam,” and they prostrated, except Iblis (Satan), he refused to be of those who prostrate.” (Qur’an 7: 11)

2) Allah ﷻ has created man upon a beautiful form that is justly proportioned:

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُورَكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٣﴾﴾

“He has created the heavens and the earth with truth, and He shaped you and made good your shapes, and to Him is the final Return.” (Qur’an 64: 3)

﴿لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾﴾

“Verily, We created man of the best stature (mould).” (Qur’an 95: 4)

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ﴿٧﴾﴾

"Who created you, fashioned you perfectly, and gave you due proportion." (Qur'an 82: 7)

- 3) Allah ﷻ bestowed upon man, among other countless blessings, intelligence, speech, and the ability to make sound judgment:

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ ۙ ۱ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ۙ ۲ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ۙ ۳ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ۙ ۴﴾

"The Most Beneficent (Allah)! Has taught (you mankind) the Qur'an (by His Mercy). He created man. He taught him eloquent speech." (Qur'an 55: 1-4)

- 4) Allah ﷻ has made what is in the heavens and the earth to be of use and of benefit to mankind. After He ﷻ created man, Allah ﷻ honoured him with innumerable blessings. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَتَيْنَكُم مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا ۗ ۱
إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣٤﴾﴾

"And He gave you of all that you asked for, and if you count the Blessings of Allah, never will you be able to count them. Verily! Man is indeed an extreme wrong-doer, – a disbeliever (an extreme ingrate, denies Allah's Blessings by disbelief, and by worshipping others besides Allah, and by disobeying Allah and His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ)." (Qur'an 14: 34)

The sun, the moon, the stars, or more generally put, the wonderful system upon which Allah ﷻ created all things is for the service and benefit of mankind; this includes, for example, the succession of day and night, the changing of seasons, and the increase and decrease of temperatures. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۗ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ ۱
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

“And He has subjected to you the night and the day, the sun and the moon ; and the stars are subjected by His Command . Surely, in this are proofs for people who understand .” (Qur’an 16: 12)

﴿وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾﴾

“And has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth ; it is all as a favour and kindness from Him . Verily, in it are signs for a people who think deeply .” (Qur’an 45: 13)

- 5) Allah ﷻ has clearly favoured mankind over many of those that He ﷻ has created:

﴿وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْوَجْرِ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ﴿٧٠﴾﴾

“And indeed We have honoured the Children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, and have provided them with At-Tayibaat (lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preference .” (Qur’an 17: 70)

- 6) Allah ﷻ blessed man by sending Messengers to him. His Messengers ﷺ guide mankind to ultimate success in this world and the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ أَهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَىٰ ﴿١٢٣﴾﴾

“(Allah) said : “Get you down (from the Paradise to the earth), both of you, together, some of you are an enemy to some others . Then if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My Guidance shall neither go astray, nor fall into distress and misery .” (Qur’an 20: 123)

In another Verse, He ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ يَتَّيِبُهَا النَّاسُ إِلَيَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ
الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah – to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He); It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad ﷺ) who believes in Allah and His Words [(this Qur’an), the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and also Allah’s Word: “Be!” – and he was i.e., Allah’s Word: “Be!” – and he was, i.e., ‘Iesa (Jesus ﷺ) son of Maryam (Mary ﷺ), and follow him so that you may be guided.” (Qur’an 7: 158)

Through the guidance of Allah’s Messengers, man is freed from servitude to false idols, false deities, and other human beings; he remains a slave of Allah alone. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ
فَمِنْهُمْ مَن هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكذِبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾

“And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): “Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Taghoot (all false deities, etc., i.e., do not worship Taghoots besides Allah).” Then of them were some whom Allah guided and of them were some upon whom the straying was justified. So travel through the land and see what was the end of those who denied (the truth).” (Qur’an 16: 36)

- 7) Allah’s love for man – if man is worthy of His love – and His mention of man in the highest of gatherings: One of the greatest of ways in which Allah ﷻ has bestowed honour

upon man is by making him worthy of His love and Good Pleasure. In the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ has guided man to the truths he needs to believe in, the deeds he needs to perform, and the qualities he needs to adopt in order to make himself qualified and worthy of Allah's love. The first of these is to follow the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in what he ﷺ invited mankind to follow; one who does so will achieve a good life in this world and eternal bliss in the Hereafter. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً
وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾﴾

"Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment, and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e., Paradise in the Hereafter)." (Qur'an 16: 97)

- 8) Another way in which Allah ﷻ bestowed honour upon man is by caring for him and protecting him from harm:

﴿إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ﴾

"When the heaven shall be cleft asunder." (Qur'an 82: 10)

To this end, Allah ﷻ has appointed angels over every single human being:

﴿إِن كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾

"There is no human being but has a protector over him (or her) (i.e., angels in charge of each human being, guarding him, writing his good and bad deeds, etc.)" (Qur'an 86: 4)

These are but a few of the many ways in which Allah ﷻ has bestowed honour upon man.

What The Companions ﷺ Learned From The Story Of Adam ﷺ And Iblis

The story of Adam ﷺ and *Iblis* sheds light on the nature of the struggle between man and his archenemy, the Devil (*Shaitaan*), who tempted his father before him. The Companions ﷺ learned about the various facets of this story through a number of Verses in the Qur'an. For example, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَبْنَىِٔ ءَادَمَ لَا يَفْنِنَنَّكُمْ الشَّيْطٰنُ كَمَا اَخْرَجَ اٰبَوَيْكُمْ مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَنْزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْءَاتِهِمَا ۗ اِنَّهُ يَرٰرَكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيْلُهُ مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَرَوْنَهُمْ ۗ اِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيْطٰنِ اَوْلِيَاۗءَ لِلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

“O Children of Adam! Let not Shaitaan (Satan) deceive you, as he got your parents [Adam and Hawwa (Eve)] out of Paradise, stripping them of their raiments, to show them their private parts. Verily, he and Qabiluh (his soldiers from the jinns or his tribe) see you from where you cannot see them. Verily, We made the Shayaatin (devils) Auliya’ (protectors and helpers) for those who believe not.” (Qur’an 7: 27)

And in other Verses of the same Chapter, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ اَنْظِرْنِيْٓ اِلٰى يَوْمٍ يُّبْعَثُوْنَ ﴿١٤﴾ قَالَ اِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِيْنَ ﴿١٥﴾ قَالَ فَيَمَّا اَغْوَيْتَنِيْ لَاقِعِدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ اَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ ۗ وَلَا تَجِدُ اَكْثَرَهُمْ شٰكِرِيْنَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

“(Iblis) said: “Allow me respite till the Day they are raised up (i.e., the Day of Resurrection).” (Allah) said: “You are of those allowed respite.” (Iblis) said: “Because You have sent me astray, surely I will sit in wait against them (human beings) on Your Straight Path. Then I will come to them from before them and behind them, from their right and from their left, and You will not find most of them as thankful ones (i.e., they will not be dutiful to You).” (Qur’an 7: 14-17)

Being that they were guided by Allah ﷻ, that they were hearing Verses of the Qur'an freshly as they were being revealed, that they had strong faith, and that they benefited from the Prophet's company, the Companions ﷺ lived as if they could see *Shaitaan*, as if he took form, coming to them from all directions and whispering evil instructions to them. Thus they strove to always be on guard, fearing an ambush from *Shaitaan* at any given moment. They performed many good deeds, which they knew would help defend them from *Shaitaan's* traps, a lesson they learned from the saying of Allah ﷻ:

﴿فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ۝٩٨ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝٩٩ إِنَّمَا سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِهِ مُشْرِكُونَ ۝١٠٠﴾

“So when you want to recite the Qur'an, seek refuge with Allah from Shaitaan (Satan), the outcast (the cursed one). Verily! He has no power over those who believe and put their trust only in their Lord (Allah). His power is only over those who obey and follow him (Satan), and those who join partners with Him (Allah, i.e., those who are Mushrikoon - polytheists).”
(Qur'an 16: 98-100)

In some parts of the Qur'an, the story of *Shaitaan* (*Iblis*) and Adam ﷺ is discussed in full detail – as in *Sooratul-'Araaf* (Chapter “The Heights,” or, “The Wall With Elevations”). In other parts of the Qur'an, only partial aspects of the story are mentioned; and in yet other parts of the Qur'an, the story is mentioned only in passing – and this occurs very frequently in the Noble Qur'an. The Chapter of *Ibraaheem* is the only Chapter of the Qur'an that deals with the stance *Shaitaan* will take on the Day of Resurrection vis-à-vis the children of Adam, particularly those children of Adam who succumbed to his temptations in this world. For example, in Verse number 22 of the Chapter of *Ibraaheem*, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعَدَ الْحَقِّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ﴾

فَأَخْلَفْتُمُومًا وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِمُصْرِخِي إِيَّيَ كَفَرْتُمْ بِمَا أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

"And Shaitaan (Satan) will say when the matter has been decided: "Verily, Allah promised you a promise of truth. And I too promised you, but I betrayed you. I had no authority over you except that I called you, so you responded to me. So blame me not, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I deny your former act in associating me (Satan) as a partner with Allah (by obeying me in the life of the world). Verily, there is a painful torment for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.)." (Qur'an 14: 22)

And in the Chapter of Al-'Araaf, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَبَنَادُمُ اسْتَكُنَّ أَنْتَ وَرَوْجِكَ الْجَنَّةَ فَمَلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ فَوَسَّوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوَاءَ تَيْهَمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَائِكَةً أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَقَاسَمَهُمَا إِيَّيَ لَكُمَا لِمَنْ النَّصِيبُ ﴿٢١﴾ فَذَلَّلَهُمَا بِفُرُورٍ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوَاءُ تَيْهَمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَنْ تِلْكَ الشَّجَرَةَ وَأَقُلَّ لَكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ قَالَ رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ قَالَ أَهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَعٌ إِلَى حِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ قَالَ فِيهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيهَا تَمُوتُونَ وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ يَبْقَى آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ لِبَاسًا يُورِي سَوَاءَ تَيْهَكُمْ وَرَيْشًا وَلِبَاسَ الْقَوَى ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ يَبْقَى آدَمَ لَا يَفْنَى كَمَا أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَنْزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوَاءَ تَيْهًا إِنَّهُ يَرْتِكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا رَوْعَهُمْ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيْطَانَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾

“And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise, and eat thereof as you both wish, but approach not this tree, otherwise you both will be of the Zaalimoon (unjust and wrongdoers).” Then Shaitaan (Satan) whispered suggestions to them both in order to uncover that which was hidden from them of their private parts (before); he said: “Your Lord did not forbid you this tree save you should become angels or become of the immortals.” And he [Shaitaan (Satan)] swore by Allah to them both (saying): “Verily, I am one of the sincere well-wishers for you both.” So he misled them with deception. Then when they tasted of the tree, that which was hidden from them of their shame (private parts) became manifest to them and they began to stick together the leaves of Paradise over themselves (in order to cover their shame). And their Lord called out to them (saying): “Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you: Verily, Shaitaan (Satan) is an open enemy unto you?” They said: “Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers.” (Allah) said: “Get down, one of you an enemy to the other [i.e., Adam, Hawwa (Eve), and Shaitaan (Satan), etc.]. On earth will be a dwelling-place for you and an enjoyment, – for a time.” He said: “Therein you shall live, and therein you shall die, and from it you shall be brought out (i.e., resurrected).” O Children of Adam! We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover yourselves (screen your private parts, etc.) and as an adornment, and the raiment of the righteousness, that is better. Such are among the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah, that they may remember (i.e., leave falsehood and follow truth). O Children of Adam! Let not Shaitaan (Satan) deceive you, as he got your parents [Adam and Hawwa (Eve)] out of Paradise, stripping them of their raiments, to show them their private parts. Verily, he and Qabiluhu (his soldiers form the jinns or his tribe) see you from where you cannot see them. Verily, We made the Shayaatin (devils) Auliya’ (protectors and helpers) for those who believe not.” (Qur’an 7: 19-27)

It is very important for a person to know his history, not so much to console himself as to learn valuable lessons. Among the stories of the Qur'an – they are all historical stories that provide valuable lessons and morals – the story of Adam ﷺ stands out with very special meanings, furnishing information to humans about their beginning; their end destination; their role and purpose on earth; their enemy – the reason for his hatred, his motives, etc.; the way in which they should journey through this world, the obstacles they will face throughout that journey, and the ways in which they can overcome those obstacles.

The Qur'anic Verses that discuss the story of Adam ﷺ and his struggle with *Shaitaan* taught the first generation of Muslims some valuable lessons, lessons that are applicable to one's outlook, beliefs, and manners. Here are some of those lessons:

- 1) Adam ﷺ is the first human being: Allah ﷻ created him from clay, immediately upon his full human form, which did not come about through gradual stages from one species to another, or from one form of creation to another. Allah ﷻ created Adam ﷺ from clay, after which He ﷻ blew into him his soul. He thus immediately became a completely formed human being, with all of his flesh, bones, and blood. This outlook is of course diametrically opposed to any of the recent false theories that atheists put forward, theories that debase humankind and that ludicrously claim that man is descended from other species of animals.
- 2) The fundamental quality of Islam is complete obedience to Allah ﷻ. When Allah ﷻ ordered the angels to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ, they did so, as a way of greeting him, honouring him, and acknowledging his status, not in obedience to Adam ﷺ, but in obedience to Allah ﷻ, Lord of all that exists. They did so without the least bit of hesitation or doubt, in spite of the fact that they were members of the highest gathering, who worshipped and glorified Allah ﷻ continuously, while Adam ﷺ had as of then done no deed or act of worship to outdo them or to ostensibly merit greater

status. So the only reason why the angels performed prostration to Adam ﷺ is that the command to do so came from Allah ﷻ, the Lord of all that exists. When Allah ﷻ makes a command, one must immediately obey, without any hesitation or opposition, and without first waiting to learn the wisdom behind the command; this is the essence of Islam, and this is the way of the Muslim. The true Muslim obeys Allah's command especially when doing so is contrary to his preconceived notions, desires, and lusts.

- 3) Every man is susceptible to falling into error: Through the story of Adam ﷺ, the Companions ﷺ gained a heightened sense of awareness about sinning, learning that man, by his very nature, is susceptible to falling into error. Allah ﷻ has made man have a natural disposition for certain desires and lusts; it is through this weakness in man that *Shaitaan* finds a way to tempt him. As is clear from the story of Adam ﷺ, one of the many intuitive desires of man is to live forever. *Shaitaan* preyed upon this weakness in Adam ﷺ:

﴿فَوَسَّوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوْءَاتِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنِ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَائِكِينَ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

"Then Shaitaan (Satan) whispered suggestions to them both in order to uncover that which was hidden from them of their private parts (before); he said: "Your Lord did not forbid you this tree save you should become angels or become of the immortals."
(Qur'an 7: 20)

He strengthened his claim in the eyes of Adam and Hawwa ﷺ when he swore by Allah ﷻ that he was a sincere advisor to them. What I stated hitherto does not mean that one should surrender to his desires and lusts; to the contrary, a Muslim must restrain his desires and lusts and limit them to what is permitted in Islam. The story of Adam ﷺ teaches Muslims about their susceptibility to sin not to validate sinning, but to heighten their awareness of their weaknesses, of their enemy, of his plots, and of the ways of

overcoming his plots. For the most part, man's desires transgress the bounds of moderation, which is why *Al-Hawa*, or desire, is disparaged; when *Al-Hawa* is disparaged, it refers to desire of the evil kind, as occurs in the following Verse:

﴿وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۗ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾﴾

"But as for him who feared standing before his Lord, and restrained himself from impure evil desires, and lusts. Verily, Paradise will be his abode. (Qur'an 79: 40, 41)

In this Verse, *Al-Hawa* is mentioned in a general way; those who restrain themselves from *Al-Hawa* are praised because, as an Islamic term, the word *Al-Hawa*, upon being used, is primarily understood as meaning not all desire but only evil desire.

4) The mistake of Adam ﷺ teaches a Muslim that it is incumbent upon him to place his complete trust upon Allah ﷻ. That man is ever susceptible to falling into error, as is illustrated in the story of Adam ﷺ, inspires fear into the heart of a Muslim, thus increasing his level of dependence and reliance upon his Lord ﷻ to protect him from the evil of the accursed *Shaitaan*.

Allah ﷻ commanded the angels to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ to show his lofty status and ranking with his Lord ﷻ; He ﷻ expelled *Shaitaan* from Paradise when he refused to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ. Allah ﷻ made Adam and his wife ﷺ to inhabit Paradise, permitting them to enjoy all of the fruits and pleasures of Paradise, though giving Adam ﷺ a clear order to stay away from one particular tree. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَبَتَّادِمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ فَكُلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

"And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise, and eat thereof as you both wish, but approach not this tree otherwise you both will be of the Zaalimoon (unjust and wrongdoers)." (Qur'an 7: 19)

Allah ﷻ even warned Adam and his wife ﷻ about *Shaitaan*, informing them that about his plots and deceptive ways. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى ﴿١١٦﴾ فَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ إِنَّ هَذَا عَدُوٌّ لَكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ فَتَشْقَى ﴿١١٧﴾﴾

“And (remember) when We said to the angels: “Prostrate yourselves to Adam.” They prostrated (all) except Iblis (Satan), who refused. Then We said: “O Adam! Verily, this is an enemy to you and to your wife. So let him not get you both out of Paradise, so that you be distressed in misery.” (Qur’an 20: 116, 117)

But in spite of that warning, *Shaitaan* ended up deceiving them, and they ate from the forbidden tree. Because of their sin, Allah ﷻ removed them from Paradise.

The mistake of Adam ﷻ inspired a sense of fear in the hearts of the Prophet’s Companions ﷻ; they remained on their guard against their enemy, but they knew that, without help and guidance, they could not resist his evil whispers. And so they turned to Allah ﷻ, placing their complete trust in Him ﷻ and seeking His help against the accursed *Shaitaan*, whose sole occupation is to tempt man and drag him into the mires of evil and sinning. These are the meanings that the Companions ﷻ understood from the following two Verses:

﴿إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَنٌ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ وَكِيلًا ﴿٦٥﴾﴾

“Verily! My slaves (i.e., the true believers of Islamic Monotheism), you have no authority over them. And All-Sufficient is your Lord as a Guardian.” (Qur’an 17: 65)

﴿إِنَّكُمْ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَنٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾﴾

“Verily! He has no power over those who believe and put their trust only in their Lord (Allah).” (Qur’an 16: 99)

Therefore, the *Shaitaan* has neither influence nor power over those

whose faith in Allah ﷻ is strong; as a result of their strong faith, they are made to see and understand *Shaitaan's* plots for what they really are; their dependence upon Allah ﷻ at once strengthens them and weakens *Shaitaan*, whose limited power is no match against strong *Eemaan* (faith).

5) Repentance and asking Allah ﷻ for forgiveness are of paramount importance in the life of the Muslim. The Companions ﷺ learned this lesson from the story of Adam ﷺ. After they sinned, both Adam and his wife ﷺ hurried to repent to Allah ﷻ and to ask for mercy from Him. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَدَلَّٰهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَاتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَن تِلْكَ الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُل لَّكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ قَالَ رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّا تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

“So he misled them with deception. Then when they tasted of the tree, that which was hidden from them of their shame (private parts) became manifest to them and they began to stick together the leaves of Paradise over themselves (in order to cover their shame). And their Lord called out to them (saying): “Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you: Verily, Shaitaan (Satan) is an open enemy unto you?” They said: “Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers.” (Qur’an 7: 22, 23)

Their repentance was accompanied by severe regret, which is understood from their saying, “We have wronged ourselves”; it was also accompanied by a sense of hope that Allah ﷻ would forgive them, which is implied in their saying, “If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers.” Adam and his wife ﷺ had to repent even though they enjoyed a high ranking with their Lord; this suggests that others, who do not enjoy that status, have all the more reason to repent from their misdeeds.

- 6) The story points to two evil characteristics that Muslims must avoid adopting: Jealousy and pride. *Iblis* (*Shaitaan*) fell so low from so high because of his jealousy and pride.

Iblis was too proud to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ, thus making pride the first sin. About pride and arrogance, the Prophet ﷺ said, "He who has in his heart an atom's weight (or the weight of a small ant) of pride, will not enter Paradise."^[1] The Noble Qur'an abounds with Verses in which pride and proud people are disparaged, and in which the evil destination and outcome of proud people are clarified. The definition of pride consists of two parts:

- 1) To reject the truth, to not submit to the truth, and to be too arrogant and intransigent to accept the truth;
- 2) to look down upon people, and to feel contempt for them.

There is no greater show of rejecting the truth than refusing to obey Allah's commands; for since rejecting the truth is, by definition, the meaning of pride, there is no greater truth one can reject than one that is sent down as a command from Allah ﷻ. The Prophet's Companions ﷺ were at a safe and far distance from the diseases of jealousy and pride, the dangers of which they understood from the saying of *Iblis*, "I am better than him," a saying that is rife with feelings of pride and jealousy.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ وَإِذْ أَنْتُمْ أَجْنَةٌ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ فَلَا تُزَكُّوْا أَنفُسَكُمْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى﴾ (٣٢)

"Those who avoid great sins and Al-Fawahish (illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) except the small faults, – Verily, your Lord is of Vast Forgiveness. He knows you well when He created you from

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Faith"; chapter, "The Prohibition of Pride." Hadeeth number: 91.

the earth (Adam), and when you were fetuses in your mothers' wombs. So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows best him who fears Allah and keep his duty to Him [i.e., those who are Al-Muttaqoon (pious)]." (Qur'an 53: 32)

The Companions ﷺ learned from this that all human beings come from the same background and are created in the same manner; therefore, no one has the right to feel proud and superior because of his lineage; superiority results only from piety, acts of obedience, and good deeds - all of which must be performed with the intention of pleasing Allah ﷻ. *Iblis*, who fell from the heights of obedience to the lowest levels of ignominy, felt that he was superior to Adam ﷺ because of his background:

﴿خَلَقَنِي مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ﴾ (١٢)

"You created me from fire, and him You created from clay."
(Qur'an 7: 12)

7) From Verses that were revealed in Makkah, the Companions ﷺ repeatedly learned that *Iblis* (*Shaitaan*) is their archenemy. When *Iblis* refused to perform prostration to Adam ﷺ, Allah ﷻ cursed *Iblis* and banished him from His Mercy. From that point onwards, *Iblis* became an enemy of Adam, his wife ﷺ, and all of their descendants. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾ (٤٣)

"And surely, Hell is the promised place for them all." (Qur'an 15: 43)

In another Verse Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَكَ هَذَا الَّذِي كَرَّمْت عَلَىٰ لَيْنِ أَخْرَتِي إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
لَأَحْتَنِكَنَّ ذُرِّيَّتَهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾ (٦١)

"[Iblis (Satan)] said: "See? This one whom You have honoured above me, if You give me respite (keep me alive) to the Day of Resurrection, I will surely seize and mislead his offspring (by

sending them astray) all but a few!" (Qur'an 17: 62)

Here, *Iblis* announced his resolve and his plan to tempt the children of Adam and lead them astray; furthermore, he asked Allah ﷻ to give him respite until the Day of Resurrection, so that he could have time to execute his plan. The following Verse also points to the severe and unmitigated enmity between *Iblis* and humankind:

﴿قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمٍ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ ﴿٣٨﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾﴾

"[*Iblis* (Satan)] said: "O my Lord! Give me then respite till the Day they (the dead) will be resurrected." Allah said: "Then, verily, you are of those reprieved, Till the Day of the time appointed." [*Iblis* (Satan) said: "O my Lord! Because you misled me, I shall indeed adorn the path of error for them (mankind) on the earth, and I shall mislead them all. Except Your chosen, (guided) slaves among them." (Qur'an 15: 36-40)

Thus the Companions ﷺ believed with certainty that the nature of their relationship with *Shaitaan* is that of unmitigated hatred, which in no way can be changed to a more cordial relationship. Negotiations, peace pacts, treaties – none of these can be enacted between mankind and *Shaitaan* to bring about peace between them. In fact, *Shaitaan* is afflicted with the worst form of monomania: his one deep obsession, his *raison d'etre*, is to lead human beings astray by any means necessary. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾

"When Our Torment reached them, why then did they not believe with humility? But their hearts became hardened, and *Shaitaan* (Satan) made fair-seeming to them that which they used to do." (Qur'an 6: 43)

As in the previous Verse, as well as the following one, *Shaitaan's* main method is to make evil deeds fair seeming in the minds of people. Allah ﷻ informed us that, when speaking about Queen Sheebah, Hudhud said to Sulaimaan ﷺ:

﴿وَجَدْتَهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيْنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ
أَعْمَلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾

"I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and Shaitaan (Satan) has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from (Allah's) Way, so they have no guidance." (Qur'an 27: 24)

For all of the above-mentioned reasons, the Companions ﷺ took *Shaitaan* to be their enemy, and thus obeyed Allah's command in this Verse:

﴿إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنَ الْأَصْحَابِ
السَّعِيرِ ﴿٦﴾﴾

"Surely, Shaitaan (Satan) is an enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy. He only invites his Hizb (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire." (Qur'an 35: 6)

8) The Companions ﷺ learned that they had to speak to one another in the politest and best of ways, in obedience to the command of Allah ﷻ:

﴿وَقُلْ لِعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْزِعُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ
كَانَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٣﴾﴾

"And say to My slaves (i.e., the true believers of Islamic Monotheism) that they should (only) say those words that are the best. (Because) Shaitaan (Satan) verily, sows disagreements among them. Surely, Shaitaan (Satan) is to man a plain enemy." (Qur'an 17: 53)

Not only did Allah ﷻ inform Muslims that *Shaitaan* is their

archenemy; He ﷺ also told them how to protect themselves from *Shaitaan's* plots, one such plot being to sow the seeds of dissension among Muslims. So the Companions ﷺ learned that if they did not speak to one another with good and polite speech, *Shaitaan* would kindle the flames of enmity among them.

﴿إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٣﴾﴾

“Surely, Shaitaan (Satan) is to man a plain enemy.”

Because *Shaitaan* is man's plain enemy, he wants nothing more – and nothing else, for that matter – than for harm to befall him. The Prophet ﷺ trained and cultivated his Companions ﷺ to deal with people with the noblest and best of manners. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةِ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ ﴿٩٧﴾ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ ﴿٩٨﴾﴾

“Repel evil with that which is better. We are Best-Acquainted with the things they utter. And say: “My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings (suggestions) of the Shayaatin (devils). And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! Lest they may attend (or come near) me.” (Qur'an 23: 96-98)

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

“Repel evil with that which is better.”

Means: with the best of qualities – forgiveness, politeness, kindness, and in general, noble manners. It is in this manner that one should combat a person who does evil by him, for by doing so, that person's enmity will turn into friendship, and his hatred will turn into love.

﴿وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ ﴿٩٨﴾﴾

“And I seek refuge with You, my Lord! Lest they may attend (or come near) me.” (Qur'an 23: 98)

Means: I seek refuge in You, my Lord, lest they come near to me in

any of my affairs. For the very purpose of driving away the Shaitaan, Muslims are commanded to remember Allah ﷻ at the beginning of all of their affairs.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تَسْتَوِی الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَمَا يُلْقِنَهَا إِلَّا لَأَنَّكَ صَبْرٌ وَوَمَا يُلْقِنَهَا إِلَّا ذُو حِزْبٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾

“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e., Allah ordered the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly), then verily! He, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend. But none is granted it (the above quality) except those who are patient, and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion (of the happiness in the Hereafter, i.e., Paradise and in this world of a high moral character). And if an evil whisper from Shaitaan (Satan) tries to turn you away (O Muhammad ﷺ) (from doing good, etc.), then seek refuge in Allah. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.” (Qur’an 41: 34-36)

Allah’s saying:

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

“Repel evil with that which is better.”

Means: Defend yourself from the person who wronged you by treating him well and by showing him good manners. If one does this, then the person who wronged him will have a change of heart: As Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾﴾

“He, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as

though he was a close friend." (Qur'an 41: 34)

By treating well the person who treats you badly, you will win out in the end; your acts of kindness towards him will infuse love for you in his heart, until he, with his reciprocal feelings of compassion and acts of kindness, will be as a close friend to you. Allah ﷻ then said:

﴿وَمَا يُلْقَنَهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلْقَنَهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾

"But none is granted it (the above quality) except those who are patient, and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion (of the happiness in the Hereafter, i.e., Paradise and in this world of a high moral character)." (Qur'an 41: 35)

No one will apply Allah's command to do well by those who do one harm, except for one who is endowed with the quality of patience, for it is among the most difficult of things for the soul to follow this particular command. But if one does apply this command of Allah ﷻ, he will have a great share of happiness in this world and the Hereafter.

In the following Verse Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذَا يَنْزَعَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾

"And if an evil whisper from Shaitaan (Satan) tries to turn you away (O Muhammad ﷺ) (from doing good, etc.), then seek refuge in Allah. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower." (Qur'an 41: 36)

What this means is that if the *Shaitaan* whispers to you, commanding you to reciprocate the harm that is done to you and to gain revenge, then seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from *Shaitaan's* evil whisperings. Unlike human beings, *Shaitaan* does not change his stance or attitude when someone tries to treat him kindly; in his mind, the only way a person can win him over is by obeying his command to disobey Allah ﷻ. Human beings, on the other

hand, are open – at least in many cases – to being won over through kind acts of affection. This is why Islam encourages Muslims to treat well those human beings who treat them badly. The *Shaitaan* too treats Muslims badly, by ordering them to do evil, but the only way they can protect themselves from his harm is to seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from *Shaitaan's* evil. Throughout the Noble Qur'an, a clear explanation is given regarding the reality of the relationship between man and *Shaitaan*, mainly in terms of this world and how Muslims should go about protecting themselves from his evil, but also in terms of the Hereafter, as in the following Verses:

﴿وَيَرْزُقُوا اللَّهَ جَمِيعًا فَقَالَ الضُّعَفَاءُ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قَالُوا لَوْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهَدَيْنَاكُمْ سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَجْرَعْنَا أَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِنْ مَحِيصٍ ﴿٢١﴾ وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعَدَ الْحَقِّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُمُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَا أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

“And they all shall appear before Allah (on the Day of Resurrection) then the weak will say to those who were arrogant (chiefs): “Verily, we were following you; can you avail us anything from Allah’s Torment?” They will say: “Had Allah guided us, we would have guided you. It makes no difference to us (now) whether we rage, or bear (these torments) with patience, there is no place of refuge for us.” And *Shaitaan* (Satan) will say when the matter has been decided: “Verily, Allah promised you a promise of truth. And I too promised you, but I betrayed you. I had no authority over you except that I called you, so you responded to me. So blame me not, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I deny your former act in associating me (Satan) as a partner with Allah (by obeying me in the life of the world). Verily, there is a painful torment for the *Zaalimoon* (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.).” (Qur’an 14: 21, 22)

The Companions' Outlook On Life, The Universe, And Certain Created Beings

Before the advent of Islam, people had a confused outlook on life, both in terms of the inner reality of man and in terms of the outer world – its origins, for example. Through Verses of the Qur'an, the Prophet ﷺ educated the Companions ؓ about the origins of the universe, and also about what will eventually happen to it:

﴿قُلْ أَيِّنَكُم لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُ أَندَادًا ذَلِكَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩﴾ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رُوسَىٰ مِنْ فَوْقِهَا وَبَرَكَ فِيهَا وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَا أَقْوَاتَهَا فِي أَرْبَعَةِ أَيَّامٍ سَوَاءً لِّلسَّائِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ ثُمَّ أَسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ فَقَالَ لَهَا وَلِلْأَرْضِ أَنْتِنَا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا قَالَتَا أَنْتِنَا طَائِعِينَ ﴿١١﴾ فَقَضَيْنَهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَأَوْحَىٰ فِي كُلِّ سَمَاءٍ أَمْرَهَا وَزَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ وَحِفْظًا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Do you verily disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two Days and you set up rivals (in worship) with Him? That is the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). He placed therein (i.e., the earth) firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e., all these four ‘days’ were equal in the length of time), for all those who ask (about its creation). Then He Istawa (rose over) towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: “Come both of you willingly or unwillingly.” They both said: “We come, willingly.” Then He completed and finished from their creation (as) seven heavens in two Days and He made in each heaven its affair. And We adorned the nearest (lowest) heaven with lamps (stars) to be an adornment as well as to guard (from the devils by using them as missiles against the devils). Such is the Decree of Him the All-Mighty, the All-Knower.” (Qur’an 41: 9-12)

Regarding our ignorance about how things were before the forming of galaxies, stars, and planets, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَا أَشْهَدْتُهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذَ
الْمُضِلِّينَ عَضُدًا ﴿٥١﴾﴾

"I (Allah) made them (Iblis and his offspring) not to witness (nor took their help in) the creation of the heavens and the earth and not (even) their own creation, nor was I (Allah) to take the misleaders as helpers." (Qur'an 18: 51)

Allah ﷻ alluded, in the following Verse, to the original togetherness of the heavens and the earth, at the same time clearly mentioning some important realities about life:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَا رَتْقًا فَفَنَقْنَاهُمَا
وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

"Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and the earth were joined together as one united piece, then We parted them? And We have made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?" (Qur'an 21: 30)

From the above-mentioned Verses from Chapter "Fussilat (Verses 9-12)," the Companions ﷺ understood that Allah ﷻ "created the earth, blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e., these four 'days' were equal in length of time)." This all occurred before the forming of the heavens.

Ibn 'Abbaas ﷺ said, "And He (Allah ﷻ) created the earth in two days. Then He ﷻ created the heavens, and then He rose over towards the heavens and organized them (the seven heavens) in two more days. Next, He ﷻ spread the earth - spreading it means to bring out from it water and pastures; and He ﷻ created the mountains, sands, inanimate objects, hills, and what is between them (between the heavens and the earth) in two more days. And that is the meaning of the sayings of Allah ﷻ: 'And after that He spread the earth (Qur'an 79: 30),' and, 'He created the earth in two days.' The earth and what is in it was made in four days, and the

heavens were created in two days.”^[1]

The Qur’an discusses in length some realities about the sun, moon, stars, mountains, etc. – to teach people about the realities of life and the universe, to stimulate them into contemplating the Creator of the universe, and to remind them about Allah’s countless favours upon them. In regard to the seas, Allah ﷻ referred to sea vessels and the sustenance that is found underneath the surface of the seas. When He ﷻ discussed weather, He ﷻ referred to the winds, the clouds, rain, lightning, and thunder. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَيَبْسُطُهُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ وَيَجْعَلُهُ كِسْفًا فَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ فَإِذَا أَصَابَ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾

“Allah is He Who sends the winds, so they raise clouds, and spread them along the sky as He wills, and then break them into fragments, until you see rain drops come forth from their midst! Then when He has made them fall on whom of His slaves as He will, lo! They rejoice!” (Qur’an 30: 48)

And Allah ﷻ said in another Verse:

﴿وَأَرْسَلْنَا الرِّيحَ لَوَاقِحَ فَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَسْقَيْنَاكُمُوهُ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ لَهُ بِخَازِنِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

“And We send the winds fertilizing (to fill heavily the clouds with water), then caused the water (rain) to descend from the sky, and We gave it to you to drink, and it is not you who are the owners of its stores (i.e., to give water to whom you like or to withhold it from whom you like).” (Qur’an 15: 22)

In the Noble Qur’an, Allah ﷻ also informed us about certain animals, with facts that are not less important than the facts

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, “The Book of Tafseer”; chapter, “Soorah Haameem As-Sajdah or Soorah ‘Fussilat.’” Hadeeth number: 4815.

mentioned about the universe at large. At times in the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ directs our attention to the many ways in which He ﷻ has subjected animals to our use – as riding animals, as beasts of burden, as food, as clothing. In short, Allah ﷻ has subjected animals to our use and benefit. With the advent of Islam, the Companions ﷺ, who prior to Islam had a very confused understanding about the world they lived in, now understood and appreciated to a great extent the fact that the universe was very ordered. They knew that, whether they could always discern it or not, there was wisdom behind Allah's creation. The Qur'an encouraged this line of thought, guiding them to reflect on the universe and the created beings that reside in it. The Qur'an established for them the fact that, though they could not understand how, all of creation, both alive beings and inanimate objects, glorified Allah ﷻ:

﴿تَسْبِيحٌ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ
وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ۝٤٤﴾

"The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him and there is not a thing but glorifies His Praise. But you understand not their glorification. Truly, He is Ever Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving." (Qur'an 17: 44)

The Qur'an reminds us of the many ways in which animals are subjected for our benefit and well-being, mainly to remind us that we should therefore be thankful to the One Who made animals so serviceable to us in our day to day lives. Had not animals, by the very nature upon which Allah ﷻ created them, been so subservient to our needs, we would not have been able to use them for our benefit. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أُولَئِكَ يَرَوْنَ أَنَا خَلَقْنَا لَهُمْ مِمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَا أَنْعَمًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مَالِكُونَ
۝٧١ وَذَلَّلْنَاهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوبُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُونَ ۝٧٢ وَهُمْ فِيهَا مَنَّعُ وَمَشَارِبٌ أَفَلَا
يَشْكُرُونَ ۝٧٣﴾

“Do they not see that We have created for them of what Our Hands have created, the cattle, so that they are their owners. And We have subdued them unto them so that some of them they have for riding and some they eat. And they have (other) benefits from them (besides), and they get (milk) to drink, will they not then be grateful?” (Qur’an 36: 71-73)

The Qur’an also turned our attention to the issue of how animals get their sustenance. Man thinks and plans of ways to earn his livelihood, and then when, through whatever means, he manages to gain sustenance, he thinks about saving it and hoarding it away for the future. As for animals, they are not endowed with the same abilities of thinking and planning. Yet they gain their sustenance because it is Allah ﷻ, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise, Who provides for them the means to survive. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَكَايْنٍ مِّن دَابَّةٍ لَّا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾﴾

“And so many a moving (living) creature there is, that carries not its own provision! Allah provides for it and for you. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.” (Qur’an 29: 60)

Allah ﷻ has full knowledge of where his created beings are and of what their situation is, and regardless of their location and situation, He ﷻ provides for them. Animals find sustenance, among elsewhere, near the floor of the sea and ocean, underneath solid rock, below the earth, and in frozen wastelands. Scientists are always finding the existence of life where they previously assumed that life could not be supported. The existence of all life forms, as well as the specific situation of each living organism, is recorded with Allah ﷻ in *Al-Lauh Al-Mahfooz* (the Book of Decrees):

﴿وَمَا مِن دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا كُلٌّ فِي
كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٦١﴾﴾

“And no (moving) living creature is there on earth but its

provision is due from Allah. And He knows its dwelling place and its deposit (in the uterus, grave, etc.). All is in a Clear Book (Al-Lauh-Al-Mahfooz – the Book of Decrees with Allah)."
(Qur'an 11: 6)

The Qur'an also turns our attention to how animals, with their varied shapes, sizes, and ways of movement, are communities like human beings. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾

"There is not a moving (living) creature on earth, nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but are communities like you. We have neglected nothing in the Book, then unto their Lord they (all) shall be gathered." (Qur'an 6: 38)

The Qur'an shaped the way in which the Companions ﷺ thought about the universe, about created beings – and about the reality of life. The Prophet ﷺ continued to remind them about the reality of where they were heading after this life, convinced that whoever among them knew about the Hereafter and about the path to safety and ultimate success, would strive, with all of his energy and strength, to tread that path. In making clear to the Companions ﷺ the reality of this life, the Prophet ﷺ stressed the following points:

This life is transient in nature. And no matter how much sustenance one gains in this life, it is, in reality, a paltry, inconsequential amount. Allah ﷻ clarified these points in the following Verse:

﴿إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَدِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا أَتَيْنَاهَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْنَبْ بِالْأَمْسِ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾

"Verily the likeness of (this) worldly life is as the water (rain) which We send down from the sky, so by it arises the

intermingled produce of the earth of which men and cattle eat until when the earth is clad with its adornments and is beautified, and its people think that they have all the powers of disposal over it, Our command reaches it by night or by day and We make it like a clean-mown harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday! Thus do We explain the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, laws, etc.) in detail for the people who reflect.” (Qur’an 10: 24)

This Verse contains a number of phrases that, in their sum total, make the intended comparison complete, with each phrase acting as a vital component to the overall comparison. The two things that are being compared are this life, in terms of its impermanence and the way in which people are deceived by it, and the compounded effects of rainfall: rain is sent down, vegetation grows, people make use of what grows, but then all of that comes suddenly to an end, as in the example of the bride, who wears elegant clothing on the night of her wedding – clothing that comes about through the cycle of rain and growth – but soon her life is taken, so that it is if she had never been.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتٌ
الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ الرِّيْحُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿٤٥﴾﴾

“And put forward to them the example of the life of this world, it is like the water (rain) which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, and becomes fresh and green. But (later) it becomes dry and broken pieces, which the winds scatter. And Allah is Able to do everything.” (Qur’an 18: 45)

What “the example of the life of this world” refers to is the quickness with which life comes to an end. At first, the vegetation of the earth, which is being compared to the shortness of human life, is fresh and green, but then it very quickly becomes dry, and the wind scatters its dry pieces in all directions. And in the

particular context of this Verse, "And Allah is able to do everything," means – though it does of course also have a more general meaning – that He ﷻ is able to create and destroy.

In another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَهَوٌّ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي
الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ
يَكُونُ حُطَمًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ
الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

"Know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children, as the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the tiller; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. But in the Hereafter (there is) a severe torment (for the disbelievers – evildoers), and (there is) Forgiveness from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure (for the believers, – good-doers), whereas the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment." (Qur'an 57: 20)

The meaning of this Verse is as follows:

The life of this world is not as it seems: Its pleasures and material accompaniments might seem important, but in reality, it is insignificant and fleeting; it is false to those who are enamored by it. It manages to have a deceptive and entrancing effect because it is *Zeenah*: Beautiful in appearance. In this world, people compete with one another, boasting over material possessions, noble lineages, and children. Just as a farmer is amazed and entranced by the process of plants growing through rain, the disbeliever is entranced by the pleasures of this world, which he ostensibly gains through his efforts. But then, just as vegetation dries up and exists no more after once having been green and fresh, the possessions of man depart from him. Since, as the previous example illustrates, this life is headed for a certain end, and since the Hereafter is approaching for certain, people need to be

warned and reminded about the Hereafter, about the two possible outcomes people face, severe punishment or forgiveness and reward: "But in the Hereafter (there is) a severe torment (for the disbelievers - evildoers), and (there is) Forgiveness from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure (for the believers, - good-doers)." Since the Hereafter is what counts - for in it, ultimate punishment will be meted out, and ultimate reward will be given - people must come to the realization that "the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment." Those who extravagantly enjoy this life are deceived into thinking that there is no other life; their being deceived is especially poignant considering the great disparity between the trifling, insignificance of this world and the consummate importance of the Hereafter."

Through the above-mentioned and other similar Verses of the Qur'an, the Companions ﷺ came to know about the reality of life in this world. Having instilled this knowledge into the minds of his Companions ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ then taught them about their religious duties and their role on earth. With guidance from the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, an understanding of life on earth, and a knowledge of the purpose of their existence, the Companions ﷺ worked day and night, without tiring, to fulfill their purpose in life, fearing no one but Allah ﷻ, and desiring neither wealth nor status. Their sole objective was to achieve happiness both for this life and the Hereafter.

One of the greatest of pitfalls that Islamic workers can fall prey to is a desire for worldly pleasures, a desire that can end up absorbing their lives. When one becomes engrossed in the pursuit of material gain in this life, he will not be satisfied when he gains something he wants; to the contrary, he will want even more, with an insatiable appetite that will never leave him satisfied. This is a pitfall that every Islamic worker - preacher, scholar, teacher, etc. - must strive hard to avoid. It must be noted, however, that it is permissible and correct for one to enjoy this life within the limits established by the *Shariah*, especially when one does so in order to become stronger for worship.

4

Laying The Foundations For Worship And Manners During The Makkan Period Of The Prophet's Life

Purifying The Souls Of The Companions ﷺ Through Various Acts Of Worship

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا
قَلِيلًا﴾ (٨٥)

“And they ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning the Rooh (the spirit); Say: “The Rooh (the spirit): it is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little.” (Qur’an 17: 85)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ﴾ (٧٢)

“So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him (his) soul created by Me, then you fall down prostrate to him.” (Qur’an 38: 72)

And in yet another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ثُمَّ سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي وَجَعَلْتُ لَكُمْ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ
قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ﴾ (٩)

“Then He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him the soul (created by Allah for that person), and He gave you hearing (ears), sight (eyes) and hearts. Little is the thanks you give!” (Qur’an 32: 9)

The Prophet ﷺ trained his Companions ﷺ to purify their souls. Through various Verses of the Qur’an and the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions ﷺ learned of ways to purify their souls, the most important of those ways being as follows:

- 1) Reflecting on the universe, Allah’s created beings, and the Qur’an itself, so that they can appreciate the Greatness, Almightyness, and Wisdom of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسْحَرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ ۗ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

“Indeed your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days and then He Istawa (rose over) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and (He created) the sun, the moon, the stars subjected to His command. Surely, His is the Creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)!” (Qur’an 7: 54)

- 2) Contemplating the fact that Allah’s knowledge is comprehensive of all that exists in the universe, in terms of both the seen and the unseen world. Contemplation of this sort fills the soul and the heart with an appreciation of Allah’s greatness and purifies the soul from doubts and disbelief. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنَ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٌ فِي ظِلْمَتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٌ وَلَا يَأْسٌ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم

بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

“And with Him are the keys of the Ghaib (all that is hidden), none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is in (or on) the earth and in the sea ; not a leaf falls, but He knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record. It is He, Who takes your souls by night (when you are asleep), and has knowledge of all that you have done by day, then He raises (wakes) you up again that a term appointed (your life period) be fulfilled, then in the end unto Him will be your return. Then He will inform you what you used to do.” (Qur’an 6: 59, 60)

- 3) Worshipping Allah ﷻ: This is one of the most important of ways in which one purifies one’s soul. Worship is the supreme form of submission, and none deserves to be worshipped but Allah ﷻ, Who said:

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ
الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا نَهْرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا
قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour.” (Qur’an 17: 23)

There are two category of worship:

- The kind that is compulsory and must, according to Islamic legislation, be performed in a certain manner – such as prayer, fasting, Zakaat, and Hajj.
- The kind that is general and so comprises of a wide variety of deeds. This category comprises of deeds that one does or

abstains from and of feelings – or basically of any thought, action, or lack of action, as long as one does any of the above for Allah ﷻ, seeking His Pleasure only. So whatever one does with the intention of seeking closeness to Allah ﷻ is an act of worship, for which one will be rewarded.

It is supremely important for a Muslim to purify his soul through prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, glorification of Allah ﷻ, and remembrance of Allah ﷻ. For if one does not purify one's soul from impurities, and if one does not establish a connection with his Lord ﷻ, then one will not be strong enough to fulfill the rest of his Islamic duties. Frequently performed worship, therefore, is the fuel a person needs to become strong enough to do other Islamic duties that are required of him, a reality that is indicated in the following Verses:

﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الْمَرْمَلُ ① قُرْ أَلَيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ② نَصَفَهُ ③ أَوْ أَنْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ④ أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ⑤ إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ⑥ إِنْ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأًا وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا ⑦ إِنْ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا ⑧ وَأَذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ⑨﴾

“O you wrapped in garments (i.e., Prophet Muhammad ﷺ)! Stand (to pray) all night, except a little. Half of it, – or a little less than that. Or a little more; and recite the Qur'an (aloud) in a slow, (pleasing tone and) style. Verily, We shall send down to you a weighty Word (i.e., obligations, legal laws, etc.). Verily, the rising by night (for Tahajjud prayer) is very hard and most potent and good for governing (the soul), and most suitable for (understanding) the Word (of Allah). Verily, there is for you by day prolonged occupation with ordinary duties. And remember the Name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with a complete devotion.” (Qur'an 73: 1-8)

In these Verses, we learn that one should prepare for the heavy, difficult work of the day by standing up late in the night to pray. From the very early days of his Prophethood, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ strove to teach his Companions ﷺ to purify their souls

through worship. Purification of the soul and consequently worship are so important to the life of a Muslim that the Companions ﷺ would pray even when doing so threatened their lives. At first, they would pray in the mountain passes that neighboured Makkah, so as to avoid being seen by their fellow tribesmen. Then the Prophet ﷺ, knowing that the disbelievers would not allow the Muslims to pray out in the open, established a meeting place in the house of Al-Arqam, where the Muslims could go to remember Allah ﷻ and perform prayer. Had purification of the soul and worship not been of paramount importance, the Prophet ﷺ would have ordered his Companions ﷺ to abandon the prayer since praying made them vulnerable to physical torture and punishment at the hands of the Quraish.

Makkan Verses of the Qur'an encouraged Muslims to perform prayer, to stand up late in the night to pray, to remember and glorify Allah ﷻ, and to perform prayer with a presence of mind and heart – as in the following Verses:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ① الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ② وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ③ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ④﴾

“Successful indeed are the believers. Those who offer their Salaat (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness. And those who turn away from Al-Laghwa (dirty, false, evil vain talk, falsehood, and all that Allah has forbidden). And those who pay the Zakaat.” (Qur'an 23: 1-4)

﴿إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرُوا بِهَا خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ⑤ وَكُلٌّ ⑥ نَتَجَافَى جُنُوبَهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ⑦ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِنْ قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ⑧﴾

“Only those believe in Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), who, when they are reminded of them fall down prostrate, and glorify the Praises of their Lord,

and they are not proud. Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (charity in Allah's Cause) out of what We have bestowed on them. No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do." (Qur'an 32: 15-17)

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَى لِلذَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾﴾

"And perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night [i.e., the five compulsory Salaat (prayers)]. Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds (i.e., small sins). That is a reminder (an advice) for the mindful (those who accept advice)." (Qur'an 11: 114)

﴿أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا ﴿٧٨﴾ وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا ﴿٧٩﴾﴾

"Perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat) from mid-day till the darkness of the night (i.e., the Zuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib, and 'Isha prayers), and recite the Qur'an in the early dawn (i.e., the morning prayer). Verily, the recitation of the Qur'an in the early dawn is ever witnessed (attended by the angels in charge of mankind of the day and the night). And in some parts of the night (also) offer the Salaat (prayer) with it (i.e., recite the Qur'an in the prayer), as an additional prayer (Tahajjud optional prayer – Nawafil) for you (O Muhammad ﷺ). It may be that your Lord will raise you to Maqaman Mahmooda (a station of praise and glory, i.e., the highest degree in Paradise!)." (Qur'an 17: 78, 79)

﴿فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا وَمِنْ آنَاءِ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَأَطْرَافَ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضَىٰ ﴿١٣٠﴾ وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ

﴿بِالصَّلَاةِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَى﴾ (١٣٢)

“So bear patiently (O Muhammad ﷺ) what they say, and glorify the praises of your Lord before the rising of the sun, and before its setting, and during some of the hours of the night, and at the sides of the day (an indication for the five compulsory congregational prayers), that you may become pleased with the reward which Allah shall give you. And strain not your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them (polytheists and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah), the splendour of the life of this world that We may test them thereby. But the provision (good reward in the Hereafter) of your Lord is better and more lasting. And enjoin As-Salaat (the prayer) on your family, and be patient in offering them [i.e., the Salaat (prayers)]. We ask not of you a provision (i.e., to give Us something: money, etc); We provide for you. And the good end (i.e., Paradise) is for the Muttaqoon (pious and righteous persons).” (Qur’an 20: 130-132)

﴿فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ ۝٣٩ وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَرَ الشُّجُورِ ۝٤٠﴾

“So bear with patience (O Muhammad ﷺ) all that they say, and glorify the Praises of your Lord, before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting (i.e., the Fajr, Zuhr, and ‘Asr prayers). And during a part of the night (also), glorify His Praises (i.e., Maghrib and ‘Isha prayers), and (so likewise) after the prayers (As-Sunnah, Nawafil – optional and additional prayers, and also glorify, praise and magnify Allah – Subhan Allah, Alhamdu lillah, Allahu-Akbar).” (Qur’an 50: 39, 40)

The last of the above-mentioned Verses proves that the strength one needs to deal with calamity and hardship is derived from prayer, recitation of the Qur’an, supplication, and remembrance of Allah ﷻ. Of all acts of worship, prayer has the most potent effect on purifying the soul; the following are some of the more

prominent effects that prayer had on the first generation of Muslims:

- 1) Prayer encouraged them to answer Allah's commands and gave them the opportunity to manifest their servitude and submission to Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ praised His believing slaves who answer His Call:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾
 ﴿٣٨﴾

“And those who answer the Call of their Lord [i.e., to believe that He is the only One Lord (Allah), and to worship none but Him Alone], and perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), and who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them.” (Qur’an 42: 38)

The meanings of true worship are not realized in a person unless he does good deeds sincerely for Allah ﷻ:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ﴿١٦٣﴾ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Verily, my Salaat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims.” (Qur’an 6: 162, 163)

The Companions ﷺ saw in each part of the prayer a way of manifesting their servitude and submission to Allah ﷻ, which had a profound effect on their souls. To see how this is so, consider the effects that different parts of prayer have on a worshipper: By reciting during prayer, “All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists),” it becomes firmly ingrained in one’s mind that Allah ﷻ is perfect in every sense, that one must praise Allah ﷻ for having guided him to His obedience and for the blessings He ﷻ has bestowed upon

him, and that he should praise Allah ﷻ by mentioned His beautiful names and attributes. Then, when one recites, "You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything)," one applies one's belief in pure Islamic Monotheism by asking for help from Allah ﷻ alone. And when one says during prayer, "Guide us to the Straight Way," one acknowledges one's dire need not only for guidance but for steadfastness upon guidance, so that he can reap the fruits that the righteous are deserving of, and avoid the punishment of those who have earned Allah's anger or who have gone astray.

Upon bowing down and physically humbling oneself, one magnifies Allah ﷻ and then glorifies Him ﷻ, showing submission both with one's heart and with one's body. Then, when one performs prostration, one places the best and most honoured part of his body on the ground, manifesting his complete submission to his Lord ﷻ. While one's body is performing prostrating in a position of humility, his heart should, in a sense, perform prostration as well – feeling a sense of one's own lowness and the greatness of Allah ﷻ. Despite the disparity between one being so low during prostration and Allah ﷻ being Most High, one never comes nearer to his Lord ﷻ as one does while he is performing prostration. During prostration, the more one feels humility and fear of Allah ﷻ, the closer one gets to his Lord, which is alluded to in the following Verse:

﴿كَلَّا لَا تُطَعُّهُ وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ﴾

"Nay! (O Muhammad ﷺ! Do not obey him (Abu Jahl). Fall prostrate and draw near to Allah!" (Qur'an 96: 19)

And the Prophet ﷺ said, "A slave never gets so close to his Lord ﷻ as he does when he is performing prostration, so supplicate much (while you are performing prostration)."^[1]

Then, finally, when one is in the seated position during prayer,

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim, "The Book of Prayer"; chapter, "What is Said During The Bowing and Prostrating Positions (During Prayer)." Hadeeth number: 482.*

one asks for forgiveness for his sins, hoping all the while for Allah's Mercy.

Thus in each action of prayer, one manifests one's servitude and submission to Allah ﷻ; at the same time, one strengthens one's faith, which is what purification of the soul is founded upon, and which is one of the greatest of fruits that one reaps from prayer.

2) Through prayer, the Companions ﷺ had a way of privately communicating with their Lord ﷻ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Allah ﷻ said, 'I have divided the prayer in half between Me and My slaves, and My slave will have what he asks for.' So when the slave (of Allah) says, 'All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists),' Allah ﷻ says, 'My slave has praised Me.' And when he (the slave of Allah ﷻ) says, 'The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful,' Allah ﷻ says, 'My slave has extolled Me.' And when he says, 'The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e., the Day of Resurrection),' Allah ﷻ says, 'My slave has glorified Me.' And when he says, 'You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything); guide us to the Straight Way, the Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians),' Allah ﷻ says, 'This is for My slave, and My slave will have what he asks for.'"^[1]

The Companions ﷺ learned that such private communication with Allah ﷻ was from the most important of ways to purify their souls and strengthen their faith.

3) The achievement of tranquility and peace of mind: Whenever some hardship or difficulty befell the Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ would find solace through prayer; in fact, it is related that the delight

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, "The Book of Prayer"; chapter, "It is Compulsory to Recite the 'Opening Chapter Soorah Al-Faatihah' in Every Unit (of Prayer)." *Hadeeth* number: 395.

of his eye, or in other words his greatest pleasure, was prayer.^[1] The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught his Companions many voluntary acts of worship, so that they could increase their connection with their Lord ﷻ and subsequently enjoy inner peace. And so prayer is the best weapon one has at one's disposal to disburden oneself from anxiety and worries.

- 4) Prayer is like a barrier that prevents one from sinning. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾﴾

“Recite (O Muhammad ﷺ) what has been revealed to you of the Book (the Qur’an), and perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat). Verily, As-Salaat (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahsha (i.e., great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.) and Al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed, etc.) and the remembering (praising, etc.) of (you by) Allah (in front of the angels) is greater indeed [than your remembering (praising, etc.) of Allah in prayers, etc.]. And Allah knows what you do.” (Qur’an 29: 45)

When they prayed, the Prophet’s Companions ﷻ found extra strength that propelled them to do good deeds and to flee from evil deeds. The spiritual strength they gained from prayer helped them overcome desire and lust. Just as the Companions ﷻ felt that prayer helped them stay away from evil deeds, so too did they realize that prayer atones for sins and raises one’s ranking with Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبَنَّ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرِي لِلذَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾﴾

“And perform As-Salaat (Iqamat-as-Salaat), at the ends of the

^[1] Al-Haakim (2/160) related it and said, “It is authentic, and it fulfills the conditions of Muslim.” Adh-Dhahabee concurred with his ruling.”

day and in some hours of the night [i.e., the five compulsory Salaat (prayers)]. Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds (i.e., small sins). That is a reminder (an advice) for the mindful (those who accept advice).” (Qur’an 11: 114)

Praying of course has many other positive effects, in terms of purifying and disciplining the soul. The Prophet ﷺ said, “And prayer is light.”^[1] Prayer illuminates for one the path of guidance; also, prayer is light in the heart for a person who tastes the sweetness of faith. And prayer is light on a person’s face in this world, and more so in the Hereafter, when his face will truly shine, as opposed to one who abandons prayer. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى نُورُهُمْ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ بُشْرَانُكُمْ الْيَوْمَ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

“On the Day you shall see the believing men and the believing women – their light running forward before them and by their right hands. Glad tidings for you this Day! Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever! Truly, this is the great success!” (Qur’an 57: 12)

Prayer, as we mentioned, is one of the most important acts of worship when it comes to purifying the soul, but there are other acts of worship which, in the same regard, are also important – such as remembering Allah ﷻ, invoking Allah ﷻ, reciting the Qur’an, listening to Qur’anic recitation, and struggling against the evil thoughts and suggestions that occur frequently in one’s heart and soul. By performing these acts of worship, the Companions ﷺ found different means of communicating privately with their Lord ﷻ and of manifesting different kinds of servitude and submission to Allah ﷻ, both of which had the effect of raising their ranking with Allah ﷻ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ said, ‘I am with the thoughts of My slave about Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in his

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim, “The Book of Purification”; chapter, “The Virtues of Ablution.” Hadeeth number: 223.*

self, I remember him in My Self, If he remembers me in a gathering, I remember him in a gathering whose members are better than them (i.e., the members of My slave's gathering). If he approaches Me the distance of a hand span, I approach him the distance of a forearm. If he approaches Me the distance of a forearm, I approach him the distance of outstretched arms. And if he comes to Me walking, I come to him running."^[1]

Of the different forms of remembrance mentioned above, the recitation of the Qur'an is the noblest and best. Through the recitation of the Qur'an, the Companions ﷺ increased both their love of Allah ﷻ and the degree to which they feared Allah ﷻ in their hearts. The Qur'an cured the diseases that afflicted their souls:

﴿وَنُنزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا﴾ (٨٢)

"And We send down from the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism and act on it), and it increases the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers) nothing but loss." (Qur'an 17: 82)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا أَعْجَمِيًّا لَقَالُوا لَوْلَا فُصِّلَتْ آيَاتُهُ ؕ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَعَرَبِيٌّ قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءٌ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ فِي ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرٌ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمًى ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يُنَادَوْنَ مِن مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ﴾ (٤٤)

"And if We had sent this as a Qur'an in a foreign language other than Arabic, they would have said: "Why are not its verses explained in detail (in our language)? What! (A Book) not in Arabic and (the Messenger) an Arab?" Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing. And as for those who disbelieve, there is heaviness (deafness) in their ears, and it (the Qur'an) is

^[1] Saheeh Muslim, "The Book of Remembrance and Supplication"; chapter, "The Exhortation to Remember Allah ﷻ." Hadeeth number: 2675.

blindness for them. They are those who are called from a place far away (so they neither listen nor understand)." (Qur'an 41: 44)

And Allah ﷻ said in yet another Verse:

﴿الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ﴾
 ﴿٢٨﴾

"Those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism), and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah, verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest."
 (Qur'an 13: 28)

Supplication is also of supreme importance in the life of a Muslim, and it is one of the clearest manifestations of worship. As the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Ad-Du'ah (supplication) is worship."^[1] In a single Verse of the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ at once ordered His slaves to invoke Him and warned those who deem themselves above worshipping Him of a severe torment:

﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ﴾
 ﴿٦٠﴾

"And your Lord said: "Invoke Me, [i.e., believe in My Oneness (Islamic Monotheism)] (and ask Me for anything) I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship [i.e., do not invoke Me, and do not believe in My Oneness, (Islamic Monotheism)] they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!"
 (Qur'an 40: 60)

Commenting on this Verse, Ibn Katheer, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "Worship in 'those who scorn My worship,' means, those who do not supplicate to me and do not believe in My Oneness (Islamic Monotheism)."^[2]

The Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ that, just as the body

^[1] Abu Daawood (1479).

^[2] Tafseer Ibn Katheer (4/86).

needs nourishment for its upkeep, so does the heart need constant nourishment, of the variety of supplication, remembrance of Allah ﷻ, and recitation of the Qur'an. These forms of nourishment protect the heart from all kinds of diseases that can afflict it. In order to provide them with constant protection from diseases, the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ what invocations to say at different times and during different situations – invocations for the morning and evening; for entering one's home or for leaving it; for entering the marketplace; for eating, drinking, or wearing clothing, and so on in terms of daily activities. And even if one is afflicted with a temporary inner illness – such as depression, stress, or anxiety – the invocations that the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ provide the cure, so that one's heart becomes alive again and returns to a state of peace and tranquility. One example is the invocation that the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ to say if they ever became afflicted with hardship or distress: "None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, the Forbearing. None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, Lord of the magnificent throne. None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, Lord of the heavens, Lord of the earth, and Lord of the noble throne."^[1]

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ how to seek refuge in Allah ﷻ during times of hardship and distress, so that they could find the safety and inner peace one finds when one truly believes that Allah ﷻ will help one and answer one's supplications. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ
أَإِنَّكُمْ مَعَهُ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾﴾

"Is not He (better than your gods) Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations. Is there

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, "The Book of Supplications"; chapter, "Supplicating in Times of Distress." Hadeeth number: 6345.

any ilah (god) with Allah? Little is that you remember!" (Qur'an 27: 62)

Standing up late at night to pray, remembering Allah ﷻ, reciting the Qur'an, invoking Allah ﷻ for help – each of these contributes greatly to the process of purifying the soul. And were it not for a limitation of space, I could have included much more here about this topic; but even if I had added more, I still would not be able to do it justice. And success lies with Allah ﷻ.

Cultivation Of The Mind

Man is made up of a soul, a body, and a mind; and as such, the Qur'an addresses man as a whole, as a complete entity. And because the Prophet's teachings are derived from the Qur'an and are in harmony with the Qur'an, he ﷺ trained his Companions ﷺ in a comprehensive manner, dealing with each aspect of man's being. In terms of cultivating the mind, the Prophet ﷺ trained his Companions ﷺ to develop their abilities to think, contemplate, and infer. Over and over again in the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ commands us to contemplate the universe around us and to learn how to think in a proper and intelligent manner. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ أَنْظَرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُعْنِي الْآيَاتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ (١١)

"Say: "Behold all that is in the heavens and the earth," but neither Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) nor warners benefit those who believe not."
(Qur'an 10: 101)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ (٢٠)

"Say: "Travel in the land and see how (Allah) originated creation, and then Allah will bring forth (resurrect) the creation

of the Hereafter (i.e., resurrection after death). Verily, Allah is Able to do all things." (Qur'an 29: 20)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾

"(This is) a Book (the Qur'an) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember." (Qur'an 38: 29)

And Allah ﷻ said in yet another Chapter of the Qur'an:

﴿ فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا ﴿٢٦﴾ فَأَبْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ﴿٢٩﴾ وَحَدَائِقَ غَلْبًا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَفِكَهَةً وَأَنَا ﴿٣١﴾ مَنَّاعًا لَكُمْ وَلَا تُعْجِبْكُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

"Then let man look at his food, that We pour forth water in abundance, and We split the earth in clefts, and We cause therein the grain to grow, and grapes and clover plants (i.e., green fodder for the cattle), and olive and date-palms, and gardens, dense with many trees, and fruits and Abba (herbage, etc.), (to be) a provision and benefit for you and your cattle." (Qur'an 80: 24-32)

The mind is central to man's religious duties in that it distinguishes between those who are responsible for their actions - sane people - and those who are not Islamically responsible for their actions - insane people. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

"And follow not (O man, i.e., say not, or do not or witness not, etc.) that of which you have no knowledge (e.g., one's saying: "I have seen," while in fact he has not seen, or "I have heard," while he has not heard). Verily! The hearing, and the sight, and the heart, of each of those you will be questioned (by Allah)." (Qur'an 17: 36)

The mind is a great blessing from Allah ﷻ; with it, one is able to absorb, assimilate, and understand knowledge. And because of the mind's importance, Allah ﷻ has clarified the correct methodology for cultivating it, a methodology that the Prophet ﷺ of course relied upon to train his Companions ﷺ. The most important aspects of that methodology are as follows:

- 1) The mind must be divested of false preconceived notions, notions that are based upon guesswork, blind following, or custom. This principle is established in many different Verses of the Qur'an, such as in the following Verse:

﴿وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا﴾ (٢٨)

"While they have no knowledge thereof. They follow but a guess, and verily, guess is no substitute for the truth." (Qur'an 53: 28)

- 2) The mind must search out for proofs and confirm or verify what comes to its attention. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِمِجْهَلَةٍ فَتُصِحُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ﴾ (٦)

"O you who believe! If a rebellious evil person comes to you with a news, verify it, lest you harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done." (Qur'an 49: 6)

- 3) The mind should contemplate universal laws and patterns that Allah ﷻ has established for the universe:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَآتِيَةٌ فَاصْفَحِ الصَّفْحَ الْجَمِيلَ﴾ (٨٥)

"And We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them except with truth, and the Hour is surely coming, so overlook (O Muhammad ﷺ), their faults with gracious

forgiveness. (This was before the ordainment of Jihaad – holy fighting in Allah’s Cause).” (Qur’an 15: 85)

- 4) The mind should reflect on the wisdom behind the legislation of Islamic laws and manners, and of the *Shariah* as a whole; such a reflective process develops and strengthens the mind. Allah ﷻ decreed laws to test human beings, but also to bring them peace, tranquility, and happiness – at least to those among them who submit to and apply Allah’s *Shariah*. To fully appreciate the *Shariah* when applying it, man does well to contemplate the wisdom behind a given legislation, and if he is not able to understand the wisdom behind a particular legislation, he should appreciate the fact that there is a profound wisdom, though his limited mind cannot perceive it. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَاءِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾﴾

“And why should you not eat of that (meat) on which Allah’s Name has been pronounced (at the time of slaughtering the animal), while He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity? And surely many do lead (mankind) astray by their own desires through lack of knowledge. Certainly your Lord knows best the transgressors.” (Qur’an 6: 119)

- 5) The mind should reflect on the way in which Allah ﷻ dealt with mankind throughout history, to learn lessons from previous generations, since Allah ﷻ deals with nations and peoples according to consistent laws and principles. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَكُمْ وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِدْرَارًا وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ ﴿٦﴾﴾

"Have they not seen how many a generation before them We have destroyed whom We had established on the earth such as We have not established you? And We poured out on them rain from the sky in abundance, and made the rivers flow under them. Yet We destroyed them for their sins, and created after them other generations." (Qur'an 6: 6)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونََ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوا وَجَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَمَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ خَلَائِفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لِنَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾

"And indeed, We destroyed generations before you, when they did wrong while their Messengers came to them with clear proofs, but they were not such as to believe! Thus do We requite the people who are Mujrimoon (disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, criminals, etc.). Then We made you follow after them, generations, after generations in the land, that We might see how you would work!" (Qur'an 10: 13, 14)

And Allah ﷻ said in yet another Verse:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارُوا الْأَرْضَ وَعَمَرُوهَا أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا عَمَرُوهَا وَجَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا كَانُوا لِيُظْلَمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾﴾

"Do they not travel in the land, and see what was the end of those before them? They were superior to them in strength, and they tilled the earth and populated it in greater numbers than these (pagans) have done, and there came to them their Messengers with clear proofs. Surely, Allah wronged them not, but they used to wrong themselves." (Qur'an 9: 9)

These and similar Verses taught the Companions ﷺ to use their

minds in ways that please Allah ﷻ, as opposed to philosophers and others of their ilk who went astray, glorifying the mind and ascribing to it qualities and abilities that it does not possess.

Cultivation Of The Body

The Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ about how to maintain their bodies, basing the principles of what he ﷺ taught on the Noble Qur'an; his main goal in this regard was to teach each of them how to use his body for the purpose for which it was created, without being extravagant or negligent in its upkeep.

In the Noble Qur'an, Allah ﷻ clarified those foods that are good and lawful, as well as those foods that are prohibited; and at the same time He ﷻ reproached those who make forbidden for themselves that which is good and lawful. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ، وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾ كَذَلِكَ نَفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٣٢﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “Who has forbidden the adoration with clothes given by Allah, which He has produced for his slaves, and At-Tayibaat [all kinds of Halaal (lawful) things] of food?” Say: “They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) exclusively for them (believers) on the Day of Resurrection (the disbelievers will not share them).” Thus We explain the Ayaat (Islamic laws) in detail for people who have knowledge.” (Qur'an 7: 32)

To be sure, when one satisfies his physical needs, one is more able to then fulfill the duties that Allah ﷻ has charged him with. For this reason, Allah ﷻ mentioned in the Noble Qur'an the needs of a human body, which are as follows:

1) The need for food and drink; Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَنْبَغِي ءَادَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا
يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ﴾ ﴿٣١﴾